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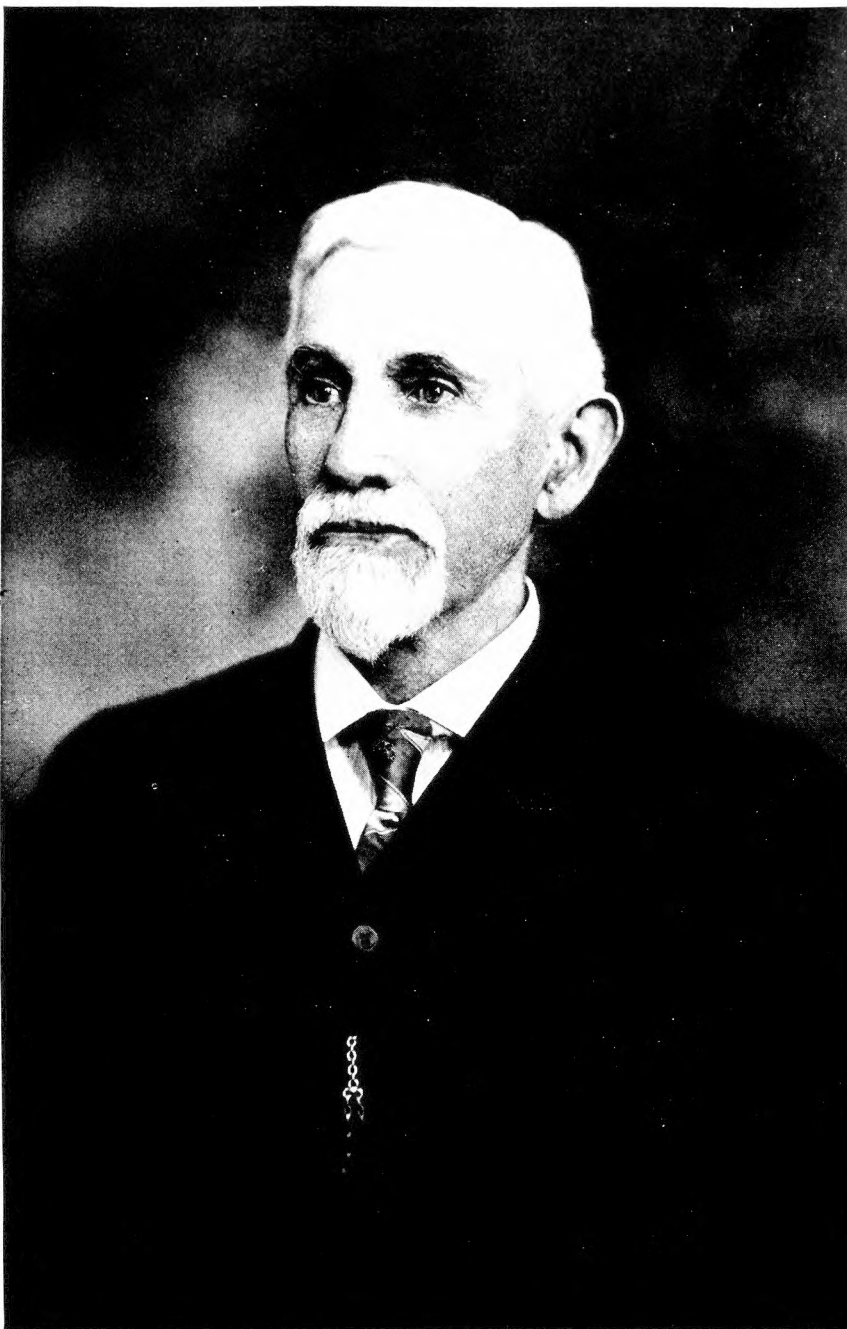








CAMPAIGNS AND BATTLES OF THE ARMY  
OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA



GEORGE WISE

From a Photograph Taken in 1915

*Frontispiece*

Campaigns *and* Battles  
*of the*  
Army *of* Northern  
Virginia

BY  
GEORGE WISE

AUTHOR OF  
*"The History of the Seventeenth Virginia Infantry"*



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## DEDICATION

LOVINGLY DEDICATED TO THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS  
OF THE CONFEDERATE VETERANS. MAY THE GALLANT  
DEEDS OF THEIR FATHERS INSPIRE EACH ONE OF THEM  
WITH THE NOBLE ASPIRATION TO EXCEL IN DEVOTEDNESS  
TO HOME AND FIRESIDE.



## N O T E

The Author wishes hereby to express his high appreciation of the aid given him by his sister-in-law, the late Mrs. Alice E. N. Wise, in the compilation of this history. Her cordial coöperation has left an impress of loving faithfulness that can never be forgotten.



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GEORGE WISE

From a Tin-Type Taken in 1864. When  
in the Uniform of a Rifleman

*Edison photo Co.*

# Campaigns and Battles of the Army of Northern Virginia

## CHAPTER I

THE CALL TO ARMS. INITIAL EVENTS. APRIL—MAY, 1861

**I**N the city of Alexandria on the 17th day of April, 1861, the writer hereof enlisted for the term of one year in the service of the State of Virginia, as one of the Old Dominion Rifles, under command of Capt. Arthur Herbert.

Located on the Potomac River, about six miles south of Washington City, this Alexandria, so noted for her well-preserved relics of the Father of his Country (prominent among which rank the pew, still bearing his name, occupied by him in Old Christ Church, and the numerous mementoes associated with him, preserved in the celebrated Alexandria Washington Lodge of Masons, to which body he belonged, and of which he was the first worshipful master), had also been distinguished more than once as being the theatre of soul-stirring events to her peaceful, order-loving citizens, who have ever held themselves ready for the call of duty.

The volunteer companies of Alexandria had lent a hand in quelling the notorious John Brown Raid. Passing unnoted excitements intervening between that event and April, '61, among other stirring events transpiring in the South, the little episode of Fort Sumter warned the good people at this point of the necessity—as a safeguard—of a call to arms of the citizen soldiery. This was responded to by Maj. M. D. Corse, commanding the Alexandria Battalion, who, with characteristic promptness, detailed a guard on the 18th of April, and from that time the streets of the city, with the roads leading therefrom, were patrolled daily and nightly, to prevent surprise from the Federal troops then massing in Washington.

On the 23d of April a picket-guard was detailed for night duty on the Alexandria and Washington Turnpike. Leaving the city after dark, the detachment marched to the Little Bridge, which crosses Four Mile Run, posted the reserve at that point, and stationed a line of sentinels along this road as far as its intersection with the Columbia Turnpike, a short distance south of the Long Bridge, and within a mile of Washington City. Just here, within a few hundred yards of the Federal outposts, began your writer's first experience in picket service. Oh, but the hours were tedious. The night seemed to have locked the wheels of time, and the tired youth pacing to and fro measured mentally the nights of the heretofore with this, and, finding the comparison unfavorable to soldierly requirements, moved on enduringly, longing for the dawn.

THE GUNBOAT *Pawnee*. ALEXANDRIA EVACUATED

The United States gunboat *Pawnee* had most discourteously, though quietly, dropped anchor in front of our Citadel, opened its ugly ports, and shoved its big-mouthed, unwelcome guns into our very faces, which necessitated our exercising strict vigilance over her. Notwithstanding this unmistakable evidence that the spirit of coercion was full-fledged, on the 23d of April, 1861, the State of Virginia cast her lot with the young Southern Confederacy, the people of our beloved old city voted almost unanimously for secession, and the die was cast.

Night drew on, bringing no unusual sights nor sounds to disturb the slumbering citizens. The sentinel's measured tread and his oft-repeated cry, "All's well!" alone interrupted the stillness of the midnight hour. From this calm our people had a sorrowful awakening, as the storm burst suddenly upon them.

The first glimmering light in the eastern horizon made visible the shadowy outlines of the obnoxiously grim intruder *Pawnee*, and Morrell, on sentinel duty at Cazenove's Wharf, recognized a sound of creaking oars and detected the dim outlines of an approaching boat. His thrice-repeated challenge: "Who goes there?" succeeded by the sharp report of the guard's rifle, stirred the pigeons from the housetop and gave the alarm. An answering volley from the approaching boat drowned the echo of the rifle, but did no damage. Hurriedly our companies vacated their comfortable quarters and prepared for whatever emergency might await them.



The boat, with muffled oars, came from the big ship, laden with men bringing under a flag of truce a demand for the surrender of the city. This demand was received by the commander of the post, Col. George H. Terrett, and after consultation with the civil authorities the terms of surrender were agreed upon, these terms including a specified time for the withdrawal of our soldiery.

Wonderful to relate, however, long, long before the hour stipulated for evacuation the Federal troops were being landed upon the wharves. As promptly as the situation would permit, after recognizing that such was the fact, orders were issued, and our battalion assembled at the corner of Washington and Prince Streets. Then came the order to march, and turning from home and kindred, the youthful soldiers began a new life. In leaving the city they passed out by way of Duke Street and westward by the Little River Turnpike, while the Federal regiments were entering from their transports on the wharves and by column from the Washington Turnpike, down which they had marched during the night. By an oversight the Old Dominion Rifles failed to receive marching orders and were very near sharing the fate of Capt. Mottram Ball's cavalry company, which was captured while acting as rear guard to our men, held in close confinement for several months, and then paroled as prisoners of war. However, Captain Herbert, hearing the musketry at the wharf, called his men into line, and started at once for the front. As our company reached the intersection of King and West Streets, the battalion was marching out Duke Street, and on Major Corse's recognizing us, a halt was ordered, and the Old Dominions joined the column.

Memory is a faithful mental artist in limning the keen pangs of that eventful morning, when, for one little moment, the mother lovingly clasped her boy to her heart while her eye spoke the silent "Good-by." The warm clasp of the hand, the quivering lips through which struggled words of cheer, the pallid cheeks over which the tears passed uncontrolled, were all the treasure the soldier boy bore in his heart from his early home. Language is tame in its effort to give expression to feelings that surge through the heart in retrospect; but the eye of faith turns uplifted to the

Beautiful land  
By the spoiler untrod.

where in joyful reunion the pang of parting will be known no more.

#### THE MARSHALL HOUSE TRAGEDY

While the battalion was marching off from Alexandria, on this memorable 24th day of May, a tragedy inseparable from these annals was being enacted in the heart of the city—a tragedy that brought death to both the invader and the invaded. From the flagstaff attached to the roof of the old hotel known as the Marshall House, located on the southeast corner of King and Pitt Streets, floated the Stars and Bars of the new Confederacy, the flag having been placed there by its owner—the proprietor of the house, Mr. James W. Jackson, a native of Fairfax County—with an unwavering determination to defend the standard with his life.

Among the first of the Federal troops to enter the city came a regiment of zouaves, commanded by one Colonel Ellsworth, who, with a detachment from his command, proceeded to the Marshall House, intent upon the removal of this flag. Mounting to the roof and accomplishing their purpose, the Federals turned to retrace their steps, the colonel in advance, bearing the trophy in his arms. Aroused from sleep by the presence of soldiers, Jackson dressed hastily, and, arming himself with a double-barreled shotgun, hurried to the rescue of his property. At the foot of the attic stairs he met the retreating foragers with their booty, and an instant later the gallant Colonel Ellsworth was laid low by the intrepid Jackson, who, seizing in his powerful grasp the new-born, blood-stained banner, wrapped it about his person, and sank lifeless within its folds, brought down by the balls and bayonets of Colonel Ellsworth's infuriated companions.

#### ARRIVAL AT MANASSAS

Upon its arrival at the tollgate, about a mile from the city, a rumor reached the battalion that a squadron of cavalry was in pursuit. Our major halted the column, and, giving the order, "Fix bayonets," prepared to receive the expected foe. The halt was, however, brief, for the report proved groundless. Not long after our troops began to move on, the welcome sound of the car-whistle greeted our ears, and striking forthwith for the Orange and Alexandria Railroad track, which ran parallel with

the turnpike, we enjoyed the great pleasure of stopping the trains that were moving toward Alexandria.

Very little time was lost in occupying the "flats," upon which we were pushed back to Manassas, where the Southern forces were concentrating.

Upon our arrival at this point we found several companies already assembled and quartered in plank shanties, which had been hurriedly erected for the purpose of affording shelter from the weather. Not having expected the Alexandrians so soon, no arrangements had been made for their comfort, and so the refugee boys were left to take care of themselves. The box cars standing close at hand served as shelter for the first night—the weary men retiring to rest supperless and without blankets or any covering other than their clothes; yet not a murmuring word was heard from any, and apparently the night was passed in comfort. All were in good spirits, for each of us had linked our fate with the young Confederacy, determined to share her sorrows, and go hand in hand through whatever trial or prosperity awaited her.

When the bright dawn of the 25th of May first penetrated the haziness above Manassas, it rested upon the long train of motionless cars containing scores of sleeping figures and hosts of hungry, homeless soldiers, utterly unsupplied and unequipped, but for the fact that each man had a cartridge-box that contained two rounds of ammunition. Yet many, it may be readily believed, took no thought of what might be in store for them.

## CHAPTER II

### CONCENTRATION OF THE ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA AT MANASSAS. EARLY OPERATIONS

THE glories of the lovely May morning shone upon the few scattered tents and shanties dotting the grassy plains about Manassas; in profusion the tiny blossoms of the wild forget-me-not reared their pretty faces to greet the increasing warmth of the bright sunbeams, while the nestling dewdrops sank to refresh the thirsty earth and the song-birds sang joyously.

The inmates of the homesteads old and new, which lent additional beauty to the surrounding landscape, dreamed little of the desolations of war, whose ungloved hand was already adjusting the mechanism best calculated for its terrible purpose. Hospitality, the abounding characteristic of those firesides—as it was of the old State to which they belonged—was dispensed alike to friend and to stranger.

Manassas, consisting of four or five houses and a country store, was at that time the junction of the Orange and Alexandria and the Manassas Gap Railroads, and was thirty-five miles distant from Washington City. Occasional groups of stunted pine and scrubby oaks dotted the open country, the surface of which was generally flat, though at some points there was a decided tendency to undulation. Small streams, of which there were several, besides spring branches, “meandered here and there,”—as one given to poetic phrase might say—during winter and spring, when not ice bound; but when the full force of the summer sun’s absorbing rays gained sway, there remained only the dry, parched beds.

A casual visitor during the summer solstice would never have considered this a chosen spot for the concentration of an army, but those in whom the power was vested, viewing it from a different standpoint, judged otherwise, and by the 26th of May, 1861, a few battalions of raw militia had arrived, forming the nucleus of that grand veteran Army of Northern Virginia, whose laurels were so bravely won in the then unshadowed coming

events. To equip and, at the same time, make comfortable the occupants of a great camp was, under existing circumstances, an impossibility, the place being comparatively bare of what was most required, consequently the first arrivals became familiar with that phase of the new warrior life that teaches nonpossessors the value of tents, rations, cooking utensils, and so on. For, several days having elapsed before supplies could reach them, these boys that had left home and anxious, loving hearts to battle for their fireside rights, uttered no repining word nor did they swerve in heart from their resolve. They were of the metal of which true soldiers are made, the metal that needs but time and opportunity to temper it.

During the months of May and June great activity prevailed both in the North and the South; the military forces of the former concentrating at Washington, those of the latter at Manassas. In the streets and byways of the Federal capital were massed companies and regiments of our enemies awaiting the orders of their chieftain, while the roll of drums and the lively notes of fifes made anything but pleasurable music to the ear of Southerners detained by forcible circumstances in the proximity of this martial music. The youth and flower of Southern life came forth from homes of luxurious ease and shouldered arms in defense of the territory made sacred to them by birthright and by every tie that enhances the value of a heritage. With unshrinking energy every practicable preparation was made, not only to present a bold front but that every blow might tell with desirable result when the hour of conflict with the invader should arrive.

As we have said before, the forces at Manassas were at first few and scantily equipped, but daily accession to these numbers came steadily from all parts of the Southern States; bustling activity about the old Station became the order of the day, and each reënforcement brought additional strength to the hearts and spirits of their predecessors in camp. Ample supplies of new tents and of all the paraphernalia necessary to the comfort and well-being of an army were furnished, and the men realized the pleasure of being not only remembered but well cared for by those in command.

On the first day of June, 1861, Gen. G. T. Beauregard arrived at Manassas and took command. His very presence seemed to inspire the men afresh, as was evidenced by the vim with which each call was met. The routine of camp life, of guard duty, of work upon the fortifications that were ordered on all sides, and



of regular drilling now became a pleasure rather than a labor. Great and commendable pride was felt by many of the companies in the proficiency attained by them in military tactics, and it was with no slight degree of interest that thousands looked on when occasion permitted, and by ringing applause evinced their admiration of the masterly manner in which favorite companies were handled by their thoroughly efficient officers.

A greatly enjoyed feature of camp life was the daily arrival of the heavily laden trains, to each of which crowds of self-delegated committees of soldiers ran pellmell to greet with shouts of welcome the new regiments from some far land of flowers, and these greetings blending with cordial response from the boys of the Sunny South made the welkin ring with yells of unmistakable joy. Large details of men were daily employed with pick and shovel in fortifying all assailable points; earthworks were thrown up on the adjacent hills for the protection of fieldpieces, with an occasional small fort for heavy artillery, connected by fieldworks for infantry.

The morale of the men was excellent; there was no rioting and there were but few arrests. Good will and kindly feeling prevailed between the members of this numerous family that hailed from different States. Camp Pickens, named in honor of General Pickens of South Carolina, was the soul of social life in camp, its occupants visiting from tent to tent, dining out and entertaining comrades at the mess table, and participating in serenade parties. Pleasures such as these bore a large share in smoothing rough phases and making more endurable those drudgeries that are at times inevitable to every soldier.

Skirmishes were already taking place on the advance lines between our forces and those of the Federals, and in one that occurred on the first day of June, at Fairfax Court House, the Warrenton Rifles, belonging to our battalion, lost its first captain, John Q. Marr. This company had been stationed at that point to act in conjunction with the Rappahannock and Prince William cavalry companies for the defense of the town, and to watch the movements of the enemy in their front.

Before daylight on the morning of the first a body of Federal cavalry made a rapid descent upon the Rifles, hoping by their celerity of movement to take the Southerners unawares. In this, however, they "reckoned without their host," since, in passing through the village at breakneck speed, firing indiscriminately to right and left, they aroused the quietly sleeping inhabitants,

and by the time they had reined in their horses and were prepared for a return charge, the Rifles were ready to meet them. During the advance Captain Marr moved off a short distance to secure a position for his men, and, it is supposed, from all the information that could be gathered in reference to the incident, that he fell at the first fire of the enemy. In the meantime, General Ewell, who was severely wounded, and former Governor William Smith, who were both passing the night in the town, took charge of the Rifles, to whom they were well known, and, deploying them along the main street in the Court House lot, met and repulsed the enemy in the second charge. Later two other attempts were made to force a passage, but these attempts were rendered ineffective by the determined resistance of the brave defenders of our soil.

Upon the retreat of the foe came the discovery that Marr, the beloved comrade and commander of the Warrenton Rifles, had yielded up his life on the altar of duty. Never again was his familiar voice to greet his men in either council or command, but his memory as their first leader will remain through the life of each survivor.

On the tenth day of June the Seventeenth Virginia Regiment of Infantry was organized, with Col. Montgomery D. Corse, commanding. The Old Dominion Rifles became thereafter Company H of the Seventeenth Virginia, and so continued until the surrender at Appomattox. Our regiment was attached to the Fourth Virginia Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General James Longstreet, and was generally known as the Alexandria Regiment. This day, June 10, 1861, was the date on which the battle of Bethel occurred. It was the first battle on Virginia soil, and the Confederates were the victors. Casualties: Union, 76; Confederate, 8.

On the 4th of July General T. J. Jackson met General Patterson and, after a sharp conflict, drove him from the Valley. The quickly spread news of these victories served as powerful tonics in General Beauregard's hands in his preparation of his men for the impending crisis so near at hand.

For several days prior to the 18th of July it was generally known that the enemy had taken up their line of march against us. Camp Pickens was all astir; couriers delivering orders were flying from point to point; fortifications around the camp were being strengthened; on the evening of the 16th and the day following the troops were moved to the lines chosen for defense,

the west bank of Bull Run, on the range of low hills from Union Mills, on the right, to the Stone Bridge, a structure about thirty feet in length, located at the point where the Warrenton Turnpike crosses the Run. Bull Run, which rises in the Bull Run Mountains and flows southeast, is a deep, narrow stream with high, steep banks, and is fordable only at certain places on the line. General McDowell, commanding the Federal troops, who were equipped with all that modern ingenuity and mechanical skill could devise for use and safeguard, advanced his army to Centreville. Our outposts were driven in on the 17th, and on the 18th the Federals appeared in our front.

#### BLACKBURN'S FORD—JULY, 1861

The crossing on the road from Manassas to Centreville, known as Blackburn's Ford, was guarded by General Longstreet's brigade, composed of the First, Eleventh, and Seventeenth Virginia Infantry Regiments, supported by two pieces of the Washington Artillery, of New Orleans, under command of Lieutenant Garnett. At about 11:30 a. m. a strong force of the enemy was discovered approaching this ford.

Slowly and silently our boys fell back and crossed the Run before them. A strong line of skirmishers along and close to the stream, with the artillery already named, protected the crossing. Our position was by no means an enviable one. Trees fringed the edge of the Run, but there was neither undergrowth nor anything else to furnish us protection, while immediately in the rear, and commanded by the enemy's guns, lay an old field that sloped upward toward Manassas. The opposite shore, however, was thickly studded with timber, and a profusion of brush and undergrowth afforded splendid shelter to our unwelcome guests, whose batteries, posted on the range of hills in the rear of their infantry, for fully a half-hour before advancing further, kept up a fusillade upon our position, though they did but little damage. At length McDowell pushed forward a column, about 3,000 strong, and made a vigorous attack upon Longstreet's line, numbering about 1,200 men, all raw recruits; but the assault was met with stubborn resistance, and ere long was most handsomely repulsed.

It was not a great while before the enemy in greatly augmented force returned for a second attack; but, as "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," our troops met them, and, though it was a hard struggle in which bayonets

were put into requisition with effect, drove them back in disorder.

When the fire was hottest during this second attack General Longstreet ordered Captain Morton Marye, in command of the Alexandria Riflemen, to "Clean those scoundrels out!" As the boys of this company, with a shout, plunged into the stream, the general, baring his head and rising in his stirrups, sang out:

"Three cheers for the Alexandria Riflemen!"

And Captain Marye touched his hat in acknowledgment of the compliment.

In consequence of the enemy's superiority in numbers to General Longstreet's small force, he had sent for reënforcements, and when the third attempt to crush our lines was being made, there arrived, under General Jubal Early, two regiments of infantry and two pieces of artillery. The two guns were soon in position in the open field to the right of the road, and, guided by the smoke of the enemy's guns, opened upon their position in the woods. The Federals, finding their attack also profitless, fell back to their first position, our fire proving too hot to make another advance upon us desirable, at least for that day. Later fresh troops were brought forward on our side, but the contest had ended, though a desultory musketry fire was kept up for hours; then the artillery boomed away until darkness set in, bringing quietude and rest.

In the words of the principal actor, Private A. D. Warfield of the Alexandria Riflemen, the following incident is given, an incident that occurred while the company was so gallantly charging the enemy. He says:

The order was promptly obeyed; the company crossed the Ford with a yell; upon reaching the opposite bank, Captain Marye ordered the company to deploy as skirmishers and advance. About 150 yards from the stream we came upon the skirmishers of the First Massachusetts Regiment stationed behind trees, bushes, &c. At once attacking them, we had a very nice time, killing 16 of them and taking some 20 prisoners. We were all tangled up together, and the only way to distinguish one from another was by the "U. S." on the Yankee breastplates. In the conflict I ordered a Yankee to surrender, but he refused. I grabbed him by the collar, my gun being empty and his loaded; he cut my head with the barrel of his gun. Being in too close quarters to use our arms, we clinched, and in the struggle rolled down the hill into a spring branch, Yank on top and myself in the mud and water,—*face down*. I was only relieved from my disagreeable position by E., of the Loudoun

Guards, who came up at the time and gave Yank his bayonet in the left side. At this, Yank cried out: "Good God, Captain Hall, come here!" But I told him that his hide had gone up, and that Captain Hall could do him no good. I then took him to General Longstreet, who, after finding out who he was, said to me: "Well done, old fellow! This is the first prisoner; go back and get another." Which command I respectfully declined, as things were waxing warm just about that time.

About this battle much might be said, but there is one striking fact especially worthy of being chronicled, and it is this: Our officers and men, with rare exceptions, had never until then been under fire; they fought without shelter, without even a rifle pit to shield them from the bullets of the enemy, yes, fought against odds of three to one, and held their ground. Comment is unnecessary. Eulogy grows tame indeed beside the truthful record of their prowess throughout their soldier life.

Casualties: Union, 83; Confederate, 63.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*War Records.*

## CHAPTER III

THE BATTLE OF MANASSAS. JULY, 1861

GENERAL BEAUREGARD was as thorough an engineer as he was an accomplished soldier. In his ardent desire for victory he did not eschew the possibility of defeat. Prior to Thursday's fight arrangements had been made, and on that evening orders were issued to his engineer corps to move back to the Rappahannock River and to commence preparations at once for a line of defense, for use in the event of future developments making them a necessity. Wagons, suitable implements, and men moved speedily to the point selected and the work was begun, but fortunately the possibilities that suggested it did not become realities.

The first great battle of the war was now about to be fought on the soil of the Old Dominion, and the intensity of the excitement that prevailed among the people resident in the vicinity of the opposing armies can be better imagined than described. The battle of Blackburn's Ford had been fought, and the victory won. A comparative handful of the Confederate troops had tasted the breath of war; the remainder scented it from afar with increasing ardor to lend a hand in the coming contest; all thirsted for the distinction that has in all ages been acceptable to good, true men in the performance of duty; new inspiration seemed added to their already brimming eagerness by their victorious comrades, and there was no shadow of desire to be one whit behind them.

The opportunity was near at hand, for ere old Sol had decked the eastern horizon in his gorgeous light on that memorable Sunday morning of July 21, 1861, every soldier on the lines knew that he was on the verge of a mighty battle.

The Federal commander, McDowell, a thoroughly accomplished strategist, with experience in moving and using troops to the best fighting advantage, had ascertained from the sad results to many of his soldiers in their encounter with us on the 18th that the road to Richmond was not such an easy one to travel.

Unable to force a passage by the direct route, and finding all points in his front and on his left so well guarded that to attempt further assault in either direction would be but rashness, he very prudently changed his tactics.

Our general in his great solicitude for the protection of his centre and right, which points he believed were the most liable to be attacked, overlooked the necessity for strongly guarding his left, an oversight of which General McDowell soon took advantage. He withdrew the bulk of his army from our front to Centreville, on Saturday afternoon and night, and from that point moved over rough country roads through a thickly wooded section to a ford, known as Sudley, about three miles above the Stone Bridge. There being nothing here to impede his progress, on the morning of the 21st he crossed his army and bore down upon a small brigade under command of Colonel Evans, who had hurriedly taken position a short distance from the turnpike, to arrest the advance of the approaching enemy.

In the meantime the Federal artillery had opened fire all along the enemy's lines in order to cover their movements and surprise the Confederates in the vicinity of the Stone Bridge. While Colonel Evans, with his little band, composed of as true hearts as ever beat beneath a jerkin, was holding the enemy in check, reënforcements were moving rapidly to his relief; and ere long the brigades of Bee, Bartow, and Hampton, of General Johnston's army, came up, and a terrific combat ensued. Advantage gained one moment, alternated the next. The deafening roar of cannon, the sharp crack of rifles, and the steady rattle of musketry sounded the death and destruction that was being dealt from hill-top to hill-top. Uphill and downhill wavered first the right then the left; then all pressed forward, and as the combatants came together there was a perfect sheet of flame, and blood flowed copiously.

The continuous strain for several hours was so great upon the few troops engaged on our side that, though contesting every inch of ground, their physical strength was beginning to wane, and they were forced slowly back. At one time it seemed as if the day was lost to us. The hill upon which the Henry House stood was in possession of the enemy, who had planted, not far from its peak, the guns of the famous and magnificently equipped Rickett's Battery, from whose death-dealing power our men were falling rapidly; hillsides, valleys, roads, all held piles of dead and wounded, yet still the contest raged. At length came the

brigades of Cocke and Jackson, and a renewal of strength they proved to our brave fellows still bearing the heat of the day. General Bee's troops were being forced back, and as Jackson's men advanced to their support, Bee, moving toward Jackson, pointed to his shattered column, huddling together in the woods, and exclaimed:

"General, they are beating us back."

"Sir," responded Jackson, "we will give them the bayonet."

General Bee, quickly rejoining his troops, rallied them with these words:

"There is Jackson, standing like a stone wall. Let us determine to die here, and we will conquer."

Thus originated the famous appellation of "Stonewall" Jackson, a name that will live through all ages as the synonym of dauntless courage and Christian manhood. It was but a little while ere the brave Bee of South Carolina fell mortally wounded. His memory, too, still lives.

The tide of defeat had now been stayed, but at sorrowful expenditure of precious blood and valuable lives. Later in the afternoon Kirby Smith's brigade arrived, and, making a vigorous attack on the Federal flank, doubled it up, producing dismay and confusion among the enemy's platoons. This undreamed-of reverse, when victory was seemingly almost within their grasp, caused the men all along the Federal line to give way, and then there arose such a stentorian yell of triumph from Confederate throats that the retreat became a panic, and the Grand Army, a force that had for the greater part of a day fought so skillfully, became a disorganized rabble. Officers, privates, animals, camp followers, among whom were United States Senators, with civilian friends of note, vied with each other in the race to be the first to reach Washington. And a race it was, the speed and wayside incidents of which will never be forgotten by either the participants or the spectators. By those who wore the gray it was not unfrequently spoken of as the "Washington Races."

When the news of the enemy's rout was borne with lightning speed along the Confederate lines, yells blended and were repeated as with one voice along eight long miles, rending the air with their reverberations. Orders to advance were given, and as the men sprang forward to the march and gained the high ground, the artillery and the cavalry were seen pressing hard upon the heels of the flying Federals. Our gunners, from prominent points along the line of retreat, were hurling shot,



shell, and canister, until the road from the apex of the hills to the Stone Bridge and on to the Cub Run Bridge, a distance of two miles or more, was strewn with the dead and wounded of the once Grand Army. Wagons, guns, accouterments, indeed, everything that could prove burdensome was abandoned, and in some instances even the outer garments were discarded in order to enable the men to move, if possible, with fleetest feet. Such a spectacle! The oldest inhabitant on this continent had never witnessed the like before.

The twenty-seven pieces of artillery and the vast number of small arms, with large quantities of ammunition, that fell into our hands became invaluable in arming and equipping our scantily supplied armies.

#### Casualties <sup>1</sup>

Union: Killed, wounded and missing . 2,722

Confederate: Killed, wounded and missing. 1,982

Forces Actually Engaged

Union, 31,875; Confederate, 18,311.

General McDowell, in his report, says of the rout:

They threw themselves in the woods on our right, and opened a fire of musketry on our men, which caused them to break and retire down the hillside. This soon degenerated into disorder, for which there was no remedy. Every effort was made to rally them, even beyond the reach of the enemy's fire, but in vain. The battalion of regular infantry alone moved up the hill opposite to the one with the house, and there maintained itself until our men could get down to and across the Warrenton Turnpike, on the way back to the position we occupied in the morning. The plain was covered with the retreating groups, and they seemed to infest those with whom they came in contact. The retreat soon became a rout, and this soon degenerated still further into a panic.<sup>1</sup>

The part sustained by the Old Dominion Rifles, Company H, in the battle, is given in the following extracts from a letter written by a young and distinguished officer of the company:

#### THE NIGHT BEFORE THE BATTLE

Saturday night was spent in watching. The enemy's bugles, his drums, the rumble of his baggage trains and artillery, not only these

<sup>1</sup> *War Records.*

but the very words of command being distinctly audible in the silent night. The next morning, partly refreshed, we were ordered over the ford [Bull Run], as scouts in that direction. I was creeping over the field when the enemy threw a shell at my party, which exploded just in advance of us. Here we passed a body, one of the Massachusetts slain [shot the day before], blackened and ghastly.

After a few hours we were ordered to our reserve, and, without breakfast, to deploy as skirmishers. The first reserve had been left in charge of W . . . F . . . I led the second further on, while the captain placed himself in the skirt of the wood, having established a line of sentries. Here he watched the enemy's batteries, and would report their movements to the general. Becoming anxious about him, I left my reserve under Z . . . , and advanced to the spot. The captain said: "D . . . I am awfully sleepy, and will just take a nap, if you will watch those fellows there." I cheerfully acquiesced, and relieved J . . . one of our men, who was the actual lookout at the fence. Here I lay on my face, my time pleasantly occupied with the proceedings at the batteries, the ceaseless explosions of the guns, and the rattle of musketry from the great fight below [above], being in strong contrast with the quiet scenery of mountain and valleys.

#### SHOWING HOW YANKEE SPORTSMEN FLUSHED GAME AND THEMSELVES TOOK WING

I unclasped my sword-belt, and yielded myself to the seductions of the scene, and was startled from my almost reverie by the cry of L . . . , one of our men posted on the right: "Look out, Lieutenant! Here they are!" Looking around, I saw their skirmishers within about thirty yards, with their pieces at a ready, and advancing just as sportsmen approach a covey of partridges. I shouted to the captain, and we dashed into the woods. I then asked him if we should fight them. He said he "reckoned we had." I then yelled to the boys, "Come on, Old Dominions! now's your chance! now's the chance you've waited for!" This shout of mine was heard by our forces on the other side of the Run. The boys say I said, "Isn't this glorious?" but I don't remember. On came the boys. I led them, pointed out the Yankees, and we drove them out of the woods and completely put them to flight. As we drove them into the field, the enemy's battery, about four hundred yards off, opened on us with grape and canister, and we ordered a retreat, not, however, before our men returned it, firing right at the guns, wounding, as I have since learned from a prisoner, several of their men.

## THE IRON DICE RATTLE

We were exposed nearly a half mile without support. The enemy had our range completely, and we were in great peril, the balls whizzing and humming all around us. F . . . , who had advanced his reserve and behaved with great coolness, says the line of skirmishers extended a long way and intended to cut us off; but we gave a yell, and, as I have said, drove them home. A . . . was too slow in retreat even after he had given the order. I had to turn back twice to look for him. How the balls rattled! Every man would sometimes have to get behind a tree to escape the "dreadful storm."

## A SOLDIER'S GRAVE

McDermot, one of our men, was killed by a grape shot. On yesterday I buried him. He had lain out all night, and our eyes filled with woman's tears as we covered him with his blanket and left him to sleep on the field where he had fallen. H . . . put a head and foot mark at his grave, with the inscription in pencil: "Dennis McDermot, of the Old Dominion Rifles, of Alexandria, Va., died in battle, July 21st, 1861. A gallant soldier and a good man."

## THE RETREAT OF THE "GRAND ARMY"

What a glorious day Sunday was for the South! When the rout of the enemy came down the long line of Bull Run up went a shout! Oh, how grand it was! Imagine the quiet woods, through which the watching bayonets glittered silently, suddenly alive with triumphant "Hurrahs!" From right to left, from left to right, for seven miles they were repeated! Then came the order to advance, and as we left the woods and gained the high and open grounds, the grandest spectacle I ever saw met my eyes,—company after company, regiment after regiment, brigade after brigade, army after army of our troops appeared. We halted to enjoy the sight; and as our glorious artillery and dashing cavalry spurred by in pursuit, shout after shout rent the air. General Longstreet, our brigade commander, rode along our line with his staff, and thousands of men flung their caps in the air, or swung them on their bayonets. Colonel Corse, our gallant little colonel, got his meed of hurrahs; and *an old negro who rode by with his gun, got no small salute.* And then the sunset, in a perfect glory of light, came sifting through the leaves.

On Thursday, after the battle, in the vicinity of the Stone Bridge and the Henry House, hundreds of the Federal dead

lay uncovered, for the prominent hill upon which the Henry House stood was the point upon which the magnificently equipped Federal battery, known and hereinbefore mentioned as the Rickett's Battery, fought and bled and died in numbers, both men and horses, and many of them still retained the position in which they had fallen. The atmosphere, as may be readily supposed, was sickening from the effluvia arising from the decomposition of their bodies, sickening to a degree so great as to render it almost an impossibility to remain in the locality. That the conflict must have raged with great severity in this vicinity may be judged from the fact that as many as seven dead bodies of the artillerymen were lying across each other in a heap, just as they had fallen on Sunday.

Among the numerous gallant commands conspicuous for good fighting in that battle none stood with bolder front nor struck more telling blows than did Kemper's Battery, an Alexandria organization, commanded by Captain Delaware Kemper. Never was laurel more richly earned nor more justly awarded than on this and each occasion upon which this gallant command was called into action. In company with General Bonham's brigade of South Carolina troops, Kemper's Battery held the outpost at Fairfax Court House when the Federals began their advance. In obedience to their instructions both commands fell back before the advancing columns, and on the morning of the 18th of July the Battery was placed in position several hundred yards in front of our line on Bull Run, on the road from Centreville to Mitchell's Ford. As the enemy appeared in its front it opened fire, and, after exchanging a few shots, again retired, taking position across the Run. The first gun fired on our side was of this battery, and it is said that General Beauregard, who witnessed the withdrawal of the guns, remarked:

"It is the first retreat upon record of raw troops falling back in the face of the enemy in perfect order and without confusion."

In making this comment he referred to both commands.

While holding the position across the Run (the infantry being between the artillery and the enemy), a general officer rode up immediately in front of our troops and requested directions that would enable him to find General McDowell's headquarters. Scarcely had the words been uttered when he discovered his mistake, and, wheeling his horse, attempted to escape; but it was too late. In an instant his body was riddled with bullets and his career was ended. A sad close to a brave soldier's life!

On the 21st, toward the close of the battle at the Henry House, this battery, having been ordered to where the fight was thickest, ran their guns so close into the very midst of the fighting Federals that their captain was seized by two of the foemen and made prisoner. His coolness and the ignorance of his captors were the means of restoring him to his men. One of the guards, pointing to a regiment of Southern troops, inquired:

"What regiment is that?"

The captain, ever ready witted, at once recognized the opportunity for release, and immediately named a regiment belonging to the enemy. Supposing they were taking him to this command, they proceeded forward with him; but on their near approach to the Southern battery the captain promptly called out: "Shoot these rascals; they have me a prisoner!"

Unflinching throughout the battle these gallant artillerymen held their own. And when the great shout of exultation resounded from the distant hill-tops they limbered up and started in hot pursuit of the flying bluecoats.

It was a running fight. Ludicrous in the extreme were some of the scenes that greeted the eye of the pursuer, as he rapidly wended his course in and out among broken wagons, crippled horses, overturned ambulances, and so on. Dead and dying soldiers lined the way from the Stone Bridge to Cub Run. To one whose mind's eye can picture that motley crowd, swearing, pushing, in a strenuous effort to cross the bridge, the way to which was blocked by an overturned wagon, a feeling of wonder is aroused that men can become so blindingly crazed by fright. Look at the picture: In the rear rises the dense smoke of Kemper's guns busily sending forth shot and bursting shell into the midst of the panic-stricken enemy. A short distance beyond the rabble two guns of the Federal Griffith's Battery, composed of old Regulars, are attempting to make a stand; the near explosion of a shell from one of our guns occasions a panic among them and they flee, leaving guns and horses in the road, an easy prey to our advancing infantry.

Numbers of prisoners fell into our hands at this point, among whom was a Congressman from the State of New York.

The big gun known as "Long Tom," and afterwards used by our forces in the battles around Richmond, with the fourteen horses attached to it, was also captured. When the last foeman had fled from the vicinity of Centreville and the last shot had followed in his wake, an indescribable calm succeeded. The in-

fantry, owing to the hard fighting and long marches, were in no condition for further pursuit of McDowell's retreating forces, so when night's somber mantle enveloped the army most of the fagged-out soldiers were quietly resting on the field. Tired nature's boon had been awarded them, and they slept among the dead heroes to whom the returning daylight would bring neither the rumors of war nor its desolations.

## CHAPTER IV

OFFICIAL CONGRATULATIONS. PICKETING ON THE FRONT.  
JULY—SEPTEMBER, 1861

**A**FTER the victory of July 21 the army advanced, and on July 22 occupied Centreville and its vicinity. There the troops went into camp, performed picket duty, and resumed all the ordinary routine of camp life.

While in the neighborhood of Centreville the following superb and inspiring order was issued and read to the troops :

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,  
MANASSAS, July 25th, 1861.

SOLDIERS OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES :

One week ago a countless host of men organized into an army, with all the appointments which modern art and practical skill could devise, invaded the soil of Virginia. Their people sounded their approach with triumphant displays of anticipated victory. Their Generals came in almost royal state ; their great Ministers, Senators, and women came to witness the immolation of this army and the subjugation of our people,—and to celebrate these with wild revelry.

It is with the profoundest emotions of gratitude to an overruling God, whose hand is manifest in protecting our homes and our liberties, that we, your Generals commanding, are enabled, in the name of our whole country, to thank you for that patriotic courage, that heroic gallantry, that daring exhibited by you in the action of the 18th and 21st of July, by which the hosts of the enemy were scattered, and a signal and glorious victory obtained.

The two affairs of the 18th and 21st were but the sustained and continued effort of your patriotism against the constantly recurring columns of an enemy fully treble your numbers ; and this effort was crowned on the evening of the 21st with a victory so complete that the invaders were driven disgracefully from the field and made to fly in disorderly rout back to their entrenchments, a distance of over thirty miles. They left upon the field nearly every piece of their artillery, a large portion of their arms, equipments, baggage, stores, etc., etc., and almost every one of their wounded and dead, amounting, together with the prisoners, to many thousands,—and thus the Northern hosts were driven from Virginia.

SOLDIERS: We congratulate you on an event which insures the liberty of our Country. We congratulate every man of you whose glorious privilege it was to participate in this triumph of courage and truth,—to fight in the battle of Manassas. You have created an epoch of Liberty, and unborn nations will “rise up and call you blessed.”

Continue this noble devotion, looking always to the protection of a just God, and before Time grows much older we will be hailed as the Deliverers of a nation of Ten Millions of people.

COMRADES: Our brothers who have fallen have earned undying renown on earth; and their blood, shed in our holy cause, is a precious and acceptable sacrifice to the Father of Truth and Right.

Their graves are beside the tomb of Washington; their spirits have joined his in eternal communion. We will hold the soil in which the dust of Washington is mingled with the dust of our brothers. We drop one tear on their laurels, and move on to avenge them.

SOLDIERS: We congratulate you on glorious, triumphant, and complete victory. We thank you for doing your whole duty in the service of your Country.

Official.

Signed:

J. E. JOHNSTON, Gen. C. S. A.

G. T. BEAUREGARD, Gen. C. S. A.

FR. S. ARMSTEAD, A. A. A. G.

#### PICKETING ON THE FRONT

Early in August the camps of the greater portion of Beauregard's army were moved to the vicinity of Fairfax Court House, about fourteen miles distant from Washington City. The men were comfortably settled here and supplied with everything that made camp life endurable. To some it was monotonous because of the nothing-to-do condition that usually follows a great victory. While resting on their laurels, new excitements were necessary to arouse their energies. The privilege of going on picket duty to some extent supplied this need, and it was an order most pleasurably received by the members of companies detailed for that purpose. The outposts, or picket lines, of the infantry began below Anandale, a small village about eight miles from Washington, and extended in a circular direction, passing in front of Mason's, Munson's, and Upton's Hills, thence in front of Falls Church, a good-sized village nine miles from Alexandria and about six miles northwest of Washington, terminating near



the junction of the Lewinsville road and the Leesburg Turnpike, about three miles above the village of Falls Church. Videttes continued the lines to the right and left. As opportunity offered, the position on Mason's and Munson's Hills was gradually extended.

Falls Church, about nine miles below Fairfax Court House, was guarded at that time by but one company. Not more than a half-mile below the first-named village (on the turnpike road leading from Alexandria to Leesburg), stood Taylor's Tavern. This section of the State at that period was thrifty and attractive; beautiful farms, containing numerous handsomely laid-out fields and valuable orchards, greeted the eye and presented a scene picturesque and indicative of domestic comfort.

The turnpike in front of Taylor's Tavern had been adopted by the Federals in the neighborhood for use as a drill ground for a few of their companies. This fact becoming well known to our boys, a proposition to break up this arrangement and occupy the position ourselves was endorsed. During our days of duty our camp furnished quarters to several scouts, each a Chevalier Bayard, "*Sans peur et sans reproche*." One of them, a Texan, named Fort, who had clubfeet and was consequently exempt from all military service, volunteered to lead the party and accomplish the purpose. Selecting ten men of his own caliber in courage, he accompanied them to the point designated, and placing his little army in concealment a short distance above the tavern, where the road was lined on both sides with thick bushes, this improvised masked battery awaited developments.

A little while, and the heavy tread of troops approaching at quickstep reached their listening ears. The enemy came marching in columns of four, two full companies, their bayonets glistening in the sunlight; but not a shadow of presentiment had been vouchsafed them of the reception awaiting them. When the approaching force was within about forty yards of the hidden Confederates, the signal to fire was given, and five or six shots sped their way into the head of the column, wounding several men, whose frightened comrades helped them off the field, while all devoted their best efforts to hasty retreat, stepping "sure enough."

Being in total ignorance of the number and character of their assailants and deeming it folly under the circumstances to be wise, they promptly remembered that discretion is the better part of valor, and demonstrated it fully by rapidly increasing the

distance between themselves and their surprise. Our Fort, with his garrison, was not economical with ammunition until the enemy had disappeared over the hill-top. The posting of the picket was now bereft of all difficulty, and our lines were established on the hill near the tavern.

Should these lines meet the eye of any veteran from any State who participated in the not too irksome duty of picketing these points during this summer of '61 his mind will revert at once to the early morning battles over the peach orchard located west of the turnpike, below Taylor's Tavern. Oh, the luscious fruit with which the trees of that orchard were laden, and the daily fights between the blue and gray for the possession of it! By a tacit understanding the victors for the day were allowed to enjoy to the extent of their appetite the sweetness of their oft-times hard-earned luxury; but at the early dawn of the following morning, the sharp *crack-crack-crack* of the rifle shots was echoed far and near, and the battle was renewed. Alternately each side held possession, and all helped in despoiling the orchard of its fruit until not a peach was left.

A South Carolina scout, known to the majority of us by the name of Farley, on one occasion approached a picket post on the extreme right of the company's line, back of the peach orchard and overlooking a meadow, beyond which was a thickly wooded section, and remarked to the sentinel:

"I want to pass over to yonder woods and make a reconnaissance."

He proceeded, and had been hid in the foliage but a brief time when he came running back, and with much excitement in his manner, related the following incident:

"I was walking quietly through the woods when suddenly, at a short distance from me, I beheld one of the enemy. Drawing my pistol, I immediately took aim at him and pulled the trigger, but, plague take the weapon, it missed fire! At this moment another 'bluecoat' slipped from behind a tree at my elbow, and, aiming a pistol at my head, fired; fortunately for me I was a little too quick for him; ducking my head, his ball grazed my ear, taking out a small piece [showing the wound], and blacking and burning the flesh badly. I quickly turned on him, when he took to his heels; and as he ran I snapped twice, the pistol not exploding until the third trial. By that time the rascal had gotten so far away that the ball flew wide of the mark, and he escaped. The other fellow, probably unarmed, had dis-

appeared early in the action, and I was left victor of the field."

This incident formed a prominent topic among the men when they were clustered in groups recalling and discussing the events of the day by the waning shadows of the camp fires.

The almost tropical heat of September's sun was well calculated to produce lassitude and *ennui*, especially to the idlers of our army. We continued in the occupancy of the beautiful camping ground known as Camp Harrison, located about the attractive village of Fairfax Court House. Our picket lines having been extended so as to include Munson's and Upton's Hills, it was ever considered a most desirable treat when we were permitted to go to the front. Gardens, luxuriant in quality as well as in quantity of vegetation, deserted by their owners for reasons best known to themselves, afforded rich and most heartily enjoyed diet for our men, while the smiling faces and kind words of many of our fair friends who remained in the vicinity added a magnetic attraction. Thus picketing came to be considered a privilege.

The erection of earthworks and rifle-pits, occupied by regiments instead of companies, now strengthened the lines. Munson's Hill bristled with heavy guns within the strong line of redoubts that encircled its summit. These grand old guns, all mounted, ready for action, and formidable to behold, were of Confederate make, of the best material the forest could furnish. The effect of their location was wonderful and precisely what was intended, as no attack was ever made by the enemy upon that stronghold, nor, indeed, was any demonstration ever attempted against it, a fact that was attributed entirely to our heavy *wooden guns*!

The greater part of the picket firing was around and about Upton's Hill, where, ever since the "peach orchard battles," a regular *pop-pop-pop* of guns could be heard daily. However, comparatively little damage was done on either side, though occasionally some lucky fellow, specially fortunate in having a home within reachable distance, would be sent there on thirty days' furlough, rejoicing from a wound inflicted by a random shot.

On the 25th of September somewhat of a demonstration was made in the direction of Lewinsville, about three miles northeast of Falls Church, the apparent object of which was the capture of the enemy's force stationed at that point. Six regiments

of infantry, with three sections of artillery, divided into three distinct commands, were employed in making the attack; but before the different sections could get their respective positions the Federals took the alarm. Only the command under Col. Montgomery D. Corse came in contact with them (losing thereby one killed and one wounded), after which we had the pleasure of seeing them—to use their own graphic expression—“skeeaddaddle” at the first fire. We followed them to within a short distance of the Chain Bridge, five miles above Georgetown, D. C. By this time darkness came to their relief, and we were recalled.

Upon our arrival at Falls Church, about nine o'clock that night, our hearts were truly gladdened by the bright fires of 20,000 troops that had moved forward, so as to be within supporting distance in case of necessity. Thus ended our only movement of any strength during our occupancy of those advanced lines in close proximity to the Federal capital.

On the second day after the movement just mentioned, the rain poured down in torrents, but in no degree dampened the spirit of fun and frolic among the “boys”; indeed, it was the very kind of weather to infuse mischief into idle brains. The reserves of the Seventeenth Virginia and of the Sixth South Carolina regiments, both doing outpost duty, were stationed at Falls Church. The Virginians did not remain long in a state of inactivity, but, collecting the running-gear of several old carriages that had been left in the village, they improvised bogus artillery by mounting on the wheels pieces of an old pump which they had found thereabout. Then, organizing a regular command, minus cavalry, and arming themselves with cornstalks for muskets and corncobs for bullets, they proceeded without delay to invade the adjoining camp, occupied by their South Carolina *confrères*. The latter, having noticed the plan of operation being arranged for, were on the *qui vive*, and, having suspected that they were to be the targets chosen, they supplied themselves with ammunition and arms of like caliber, and the command was in readiness to repel the anticipated attack.

The battle was not long in opening. The boys of the Old Dominion advanced in their usual gallant style and made a vigorous onslaught upon their ever-ready neighbors. A hard fought struggle ensued, with a great deal of tussling and many amusing incidents, in which each party got the worst of it. At length the Virginians succeeded in driving the South Carolinians from the field, capturing many prisoners and much ammunition. They

were declared the victors. The whole transaction afforded much enjoyment to both sides,—officers and men participating with vim. It was a day of pleasant amusement and was often reverted to as one of the most delightful of our army life.

During the season of inactivity there were numerous strange rumors afloat, of which the following is a fair specimen:

The incessant *rat-a-tat-tat* of the Federal drums became very annoying to us, and gave rise to much speculation as to why no sleep was permitted to their drummer boys. From this state of affairs soon originated the current rumor that the enemy employed mule-carts, with the mules attached, to haul their drums up and down the roads, that by the constant *rub-a-dub-dub* from a thousand or more such instruments, the mules braying in concert, they would frighten us off.

## CHAPTER V

CAMPING. BATTLE OF BALL'S BLUFF. MINOR INCIDENTS.  
OCTOBER—DECEMBER, 1861

THE latter part of September, 1861, the infantry lines on the Confederate front were contracted so as to be established near the encampment of the army around Fairfax Court House. The deep, muddy roads and pools of water rendered the work of removing the telegraph wires from the village westward tediously slow to those upon whom it devolved, making them in no degree objects of envy to their more fortunate comrades. To the cavalry under their peerless leader, General J. E. B. Stuart, was assigned charge of the front, and the men, in their unwearying watchfulness, were ever on the alert to detect and to report the least movement of the enemy. Duty faithfully performed in all minutiae stamped their record.

The 3d of October was a gala time at Camp Harrison, occasioned by the enthusiastic "turn out" of the army, in honor of the presence of the President and Commander-in-Chief, Jefferson Davis, and his staff, who visited us for the purpose of reviewing the troops. From ten to twelve thousand men were in line and great enthusiasm prevailed throughout the lines.

The enemy was seldom encountered during these early days in October, though occasionally scouting parties were sent to reconnoiter, and returned tired almost to exhaustion by severe marching.

We give the following scrap as a memento of the stirring scenes and enjoyable times through which we passed while picketing at Falls Church and in its vicinity:

FALLS CHURCH, OCTOBER 5TH, 1861.

EDITOR *National Republican*:

Inclosed I send you a correct copy of a letter found by me, pinned on a gate near Falls Church. The letter is something of a curiosity; so I send it for publication. The direction on the outside is to "Yankee," care of "Luck."

Yours, &c.,

W. H. G.  
35TH REGIMENT N. Y. S. V

## (Copy of letter)

DEAR YANKEES:

Having been resident denizens of Falls Church for some time, we to-day reluctantly evacuate, not because you intimidate by your presence, but only in obedience to military dictation.

We leave you a fire to cook potatoes, also to warm by, as the nights are now uncomfortable on account of their chilling influence. Mr. J. T. Petty, an inhabitant of Washington, but a "Secesh" in the rebel army, joins compliments with me upon this propitious occasion.

(Signed)

JOHNSTON,

COMPANY B. 17TH REG. VA. VOLS.

P. S.—We are members of the "Bloody Seventeenth,"—the well merited sobriquet of our regiment, gained in the battle of Bull Run.

On the 12th of October the brigade of General James Longstreet drilled for the last time under his command. For a moment unbroken silence was maintained, as the old commander bade adieu to the body of men he had known and tested so long as his followers, and then burst forth, as if with supernatural power, a loud, long peal of heartfelt yells from a thousand throats, thus drowning the words that severed them from a chieftain whom they so loved and honored for his bravery. In relinquishing this command the following complimentary order was addressed to the men:

HEADQUARTERS FOURTH BRIGADE, FIRST CORPS,  
A. P. FAIRFAX C. H., October 13th, 1861.

GENERAL ORDER NO. 17.

In relinquishing the command of the Fourth Brigade, First Corps, Army of the Potomac, the Commanding General expresses his sincere thanks to the officers and soldiers of the command for the kindly patience, the soldierly fortitude, and cheerful obedience which they have invariably exhibited during the many hardships and privations of a long and trying campaign.

The command of a brigade, second to none, is well worthy the boast of any General, and even regret may well be felt at promotion which removes it a step at least from him.

By command of Maj.-Gen. Longstreet,

G. MOXLEY SORREL,

Capt. and A. A. G.

Late in the evening (October 16) the infantry abandoned the picket lines, and a tiresome march was begun, which continued until midnight, when we arrived at Centreville.

Fairfax Court House, for many months a gay and truly pleasant abiding place, presented, as the men passed through it late at night, the appearance almost of a deserted village; only a few cavalry were to be seen, the army having left some hours earlier for Centreville. The very pleasant and enjoyable association that had been so long formed with the good people of this section was thus suddenly interrupted, and we all fell back to seek new camping facilities, bearing with us memories of many kindnesses to be not soon nor easily forgotten. In the excitement and confusion incident upon the preparations for the march, the tents of the Seventh Virginia Regiment caught fire and, before it could be extinguished, the greater number of them were consumed. Many of the citizens, unwilling to be again within the lines of the Federal army, bade home a quiet adieu and fell back with the Confederates.

Soon Centreville became what Fairfax Court House had been, a scene of busy army life. The surrounding fields were promptly converted into drill grounds for thousands of Confederate soldiers. Ax, pick, and shovel were again brought into requisition, and ere long the high points about the village were selected and presented scenes of great activity as forts, redoubts, earthworks and rifle-pits were rapidly completed; for each regiment in the army sent forth regular details daily, and the adjacent country became alive with men pursuing the pleasant avocation of digging and ditching. The enemy's "big balloon" was often visible in the direction of the Court House, and its occupants doubtless mistook the Southern army for a large body of "sappers and miners," as men and officers for days and weeks were in the "ditch."

The country about Centreville was a picturesque blending of hill and dale. Standing about the middle of the high range of hills in Centreville and looking westward during any afternoon of that lovely autumn weather, a scene of rare beauty met one's gaze. The line of Bull Run (or "Yankee Run," as it was called just after the first Manassas battle) was clearly defined by a skirt of timber, whose luxuriant foliage had assumed the indescribable brilliant coloring of an early autumn. In front, the country, undulating with hill and dale and devoid of trees, was truly picturesque with the groups of white canvas dotted here and there upon its surface. Glimpses of the familiar hillocks that rose above the plains of Manassas could be caught beyond the gorgeous leafy canopy of the grand old oaks, while, further on,



the blue and green shadows played behind the tops of the Bull Run Mountains that rose higher and higher in their majestic beauty. When the atmosphere was in perfection for exhibiting the fullness of nature's scenic loveliness, there could be seen, yet further away to the west, the sunlit caps of the more than grand old Blue Ridge, whose lofty peaks reared upward almost to Heaven's blue dome. When the twilight deepened, until the noisy day was merged into the silence of the night, a thousand glowing camp fires sprang up as if by magic, bringing forth those pictures of light and shadow that defy the limner's pen to portray; and then came, soothed by their influences, the restful calm that the weary soldier can so fully appreciate.

But little of interest transpired to vary the daily routine of camp life, and, as may be supposed, it became to some extent monotonous.

#### THE BATTLE OF BALL'S BLUFF

On the 19th of October, 1861 (Saturday night), the Union forces located temporarily on the Maryland side of the Potomac, opposite Leesburg, Va., opened fire from numerous guns, rousing to a great extent the entire vicinity. Our forces at that point consisted of one brigade of infantry, a few companies of cavalry, and a battery of artillery, under command of General N. G. Evans. On account of a report that the enemy was advancing from Edward's Ferry, the bulk of that little army was moved at midnight to the Burnt Bridge, at the intersection of Goose Creek and the Alexandria Turnpike, and posted on favorable ground. The day following the enemy kept up a constant but ineffectual fire, and on this day our men captured a courier of the Union commanding general, G. B. McClellan, who bore important dispatches.

It was during Sunday night that the Union troops crossed to the Virginia side at Edward's Ferry, the mouth of Goose Creek, and at Ball's Bluff, several miles above; and to both these points, without delay, our troops were marched to meet them. At Ball's Bluff, early in the day, they became warmly engaged with the enemy, and upon being reënforced a while later, gradually gained ground. The Eighth Virginia Infantry, under Colonel Eppa Hunton, arrived on the field about noonday, and at once became participants in the action. Constant reënforcements were furnished the enemy, and to our side came additional support from

the remainder of the brigade. Three o'clock p. m., or thereabout, the engagement became general, both sides fighting with desperation. This continued until nearly six o'clock, when the order: "Charge with the bayonet!" was given our men. Springing forward with a yell, the whole line pressed back the enemy until the bluff was reached; then, unable to get further, many of the foe surrendered, while others, attempting to swim the river, were shot or drowned. A complete rout ensued, many of those retreating being driven into the river.

Several pieces of artillery were captured here and added to our supply. Brigadier-General Charles P. Stone commanded the Union forces in their disastrous effort, and the poor fellow, we understand, instead of being encouraged to do better, was arrested and incarcerated! Many officers on both sides were rendered *hors de combat*. The Eighteenth Mississippi fought with distinguished bravery, and were sadly bereft by the death of their gallant commander, Colonel E. R. Burt.

#### Casualties<sup>1</sup>

Union: Killed, wounded, and missing	921
Confederate: Killed, wounded, and missing	155

#### Forces engaged

Union, 3,000 (low estimate); Confederate, 1,709 (official).

This little affair occasioned some excitement in the camps about Centreville when the news was received, consequently three brigades of infantry were dispatched therefrom, to lend a hand in case of a renewal of the struggle. The enemy, however, rested from their fatigue on the other side of the river, and so this episode closed.

#### CAMP SCENES AND INCIDENTS

On the 30th of October a very imposing and highly interesting ceremony occurred in the presentation of our State Flag to each of the Virginia regiments by his Excellency, Governor John Letcher, who prefaced each donation with a few fitting remarks. When the turn of the Seventeenth Virginia came, he said:

"I present this flag in the name of the Commonwealth of

<sup>1</sup> *War Records.*

Virginia. Take it, and when you go into Alexandria drive out the invaders of our soil."

Colonel Corse, receiving the flag in the name of his regiment, responded:

"Governor, I accept this flag from our beloved old Mother, and tender the thanks of the regiment I have the honor to command. With confidence I place it in their hands, and promise that it shall be planted on the ramparts of Fort Ellsworth, or the blood of the Seventeenth shall flow freely in the attempt."

The world knows how this promise was kept.

A grand review was ordered the next day in honor of the distinguished guest, a demonstration that was enjoyed by the entire army. At that period our army was known as the Army of the Potomac, and our commander was General G. P. T. Beauregard. The department was known as the Department of Northern Virginia, under the command of General Joseph E. Johnston (headquarters with our army), and consisted of the Potomac, the Valley, and the Aquia districts, which were commanded respectively by Generals Beauregard, T. J. Jackson, and Holmes.

November was ushered in, not with the still, smoky atmosphere that betokens the coming Indian Summer, but as a roaring lion bringing destruction and confusion in its wake to many a well-kept camping ground. A terrific storm of wind, rain and hail from the northwest began on the night of the first, and such was the impetus of the wind that but few tents pitched upon the high grounds escaped prostration, if not entire wreck. When the early rays of morning descended athwart the hills on the second of November the spectacle presented by some of the camps was lamentable indeed. Huddled together in groups, endeavoring to keep warm, were men whose tents had succumbed to the fury of the storm. The fires were all extinguished, the blankets, cooking utensils, and all the remnant of paraphernalia belonging to their soldier outfit lay scattered indiscriminately in every direction over the camping grounds. Many had gone supperless on the previous evening, and owing to the inclemency of the morning—for the rain was still pouring and the wind howling—few had even a shadow of chance for a breakfast. Such items as this made camp life memorable in 1861. When, late in the afternoon, the downpour ceased, the clearing off was attended by piercingly cold weather. The fires, however, were soon rekindled, the inner man zealously looked after, and the canton-

ments rescued from chaos and partially restored to habitable order.

While on picket duty near Fairfax Court House, early in the month, two officers of the Seventeenth Virginia were placed under arrest and deprived of their swords for several hours, on account of allowing a lady to pass their outpost. When it became known that the said lady was none other than the noted Confederate aide, Belle Boyd, their sentence was annulled and they were released.

Brigadier-General Clark, of Mississippi, was assigned our command on the 4th of November, in place of General Longstreet, who had been promoted to the position of division commander. General Clark having been ordered to the Western Army on the 8th, Brigadier-General Ewell succeeded to the command of our Brigade, which was composed at that time of the First, Seventh, Eleventh, and Seventeenth Virginia regiments. It was during this period that most of the Virginia troops voted unanimously to enlist for the war.

During the winter months the men were allowed from twenty-four to forty-eight-hour passes, which enabled them to visit friends and acquaintances, indulge in a frolic, or amuse themselves as they preferred for the time specified. This was productive of good effect, in that it tended to render the boys contented and obedient.

Battle flags were presented to our division on the 28th, and the address to each regiment was enthusiastically received by the men. To this succeeded a grand review, which passed off quietly, and reflected credit upon both commander and troops.

Duty on the outposts during the intensely cold nights that prevailed at this time made sore discomfort for the soldiers' toes, for treading the lonely beats of the forest path, or sitting benumbed at the roots of some old weather-beaten oak, was far removed from child's play. The experienced alone can estimate the mental status of one thus engaged, especially if in hourly anticipation of the enemy's approach. They only can appreciate the watchfulness and care requisite to protect the line as well as the body of the sentinel. Eyes and ears must be ever on the alert to detect the slightest irregularity; the musket must be ever ready for instant use in event of an alarm. Notwithstanding all this, there is oftentimes cause for pleasurable excitement, which sends the blood coursing with rapidity through the veins, and lends to the life a charm that is both exhilarating and unselfish.

In the early part of December two members of the battalion known as the Tiger Rifles, commanded by Major Roberdeau Wheat, in an altercation with one of their lieutenants, attempted his life. There was a speedy trial by court martial, which found them guilty, and sentenced them to be shot. There was no reprieve, and they were executed near Centreville, in the presence of a large number of the troops. It was a sad sight, but salutary as an example, adding much, no doubt, to the proper subordination and morale of the army.

Now came orders to the men for constructing winter quarters. All who could procure horses and wagons utilized them in hauling material for building. The framework in dilapidated and deserted houses in the section lying between the lines soon took the road to camp, where no time was lost in converting the fragments into good, substantial cabins, in which were included all the conveniences for sleeping, cooking, and lolling. Their comfort was well appreciated as a haven of rest after the exertions of a dreary day or the fatigue of a cold night of watching.

On the 11th of December the Quartermaster of the Army gave to the generals in command a grand entertainment at his quarters in Centreville. Among those present were Johnston, Stuart, Longstreet, and Van Dorn. Eggnog, apple toddy, and liquors in variety unmingled, with edibles both refreshing and substantial, were most appetizingly spread to tempt and gratify the tastes of each and all. The festivities were prolonged until nearly dawn, and if circumstantial evidence and current report are to be relied upon, there was rare enjoyment, for the party was what is termed in stylish parlance "a stag." The gayety of this occasion, however, did not interfere in any way with General Longstreet's usual division drill; this drill required a large area of surface to enable it to be effectually executed. The evolutions of at least fifteen thousand troops *en masse* presented an imposing sight and one not often witnessed. General Longstreet was the only commander in our army who drilled by division. Multitudes gathered on these days as "Lookers on in Venice," and no doubt retired feeling amply repaid for the coming.

Soon after this a most lamentable affair occurred, an event that brought heartfelt sorrow to many and sadness to all who came within range of its influence. A foraging party, composed of four regiments of infantry escorted by a detachment of Stuart's cavalry, accompanied by a wagon train and teamsters, encountered a greatly superior (numerically) force of the enemy

while approaching Drainesville, in Loudon County. A short, bloody fight ensued, resulting in the forced retreat of our men, who left their dead and wounded on the field. The weather was bitterly cold, rendering agonizing in the extreme the suffering of the wounded left lying on the frozen ground throughout the night. The Eleventh Virginia Regiment, one of our brigade, lost fifty men in killed, wounded, and missing. As this mishap was supposed to have been the result of carelessness on the part of some one in command, it was more than ordinarily deplorable. The following is from the official reports of the casualties:

Union loss, 68; Confederate loss, 194.

Forces engaged: Union, 7 regiments, 1 battery—3,500; Confederate: 4 regiments, 1 battery, 2 companies cavalry—1,600.

After two days a number of the dead were brought into Centreville for burial. It was a sight so heartrending that even at this remote day it cannot be recalled without a pang. Frozen stiff before the slightest relaxation of muscle could change the posture in which the agonies of death had been endured, some of the bodies lay doubled up, others were found with their rigid fingers clutching their clothing, or clasped about their accoutrements.

The following touchingly beautiful letter, fragrant with the dew of feeling, from the pen of the brave Samuel Garland, Jr., colonel commanding the gallant Old Eleventh, was read to our regiment on dress parade:

CAMP OF THE 11TH VIRGINIA VOLUNTEERS,  
1ST BRIGADE, 2ND DIVISION,  
December 23rd, 1861.

COL. M. D. CORSE,

Commanding 17th Virginia Volunteers.

DEAR SIR:—I desire to express, on my own behalf and on behalf of the officers and men of the 11th Virginia Volunteers, our grateful appreciation of the soldierly friendship which induced your command to unite in paying the last tribute of respect to those of our gallant comrades whom we buried on yesterday.

Such evidences of mutual regard cannot fail to have the effect of increasing the spirit and efficiency of both commands. Rest assured that we shall share together the hardships of the tented field, watching with eager interest the fortunes of the gallant 17th until the day shall come when their flag shall wave once more in the streets of Alexandria.

That our acknowledgment of the act of friendship referred to

may be communicated to your command, I request that you will direct your Adjutant to read this note at your evening parade.

I remain, Colonel, with high regard,

Your friend and obedient servant,

(Signed)

SAMUEL GARLAND, JR.,

Col. 11th Va. Vols.

## CHAPTER VI

CHRISTMAS, 1861. THE SPRING CAMPAIGN, 1862

THE severity of the weather during the latter part of December occasioned great suffering to the soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia, especially to those from the sunny climes of the extreme Southern States, of whom there were many. Snow, rain, hail, and sleet were frequent, and often combined and formed new features in their camp life with which their physical strength could cope only by means of terrible suffering. Rations of whiskey were issued as a tonic, and as a preventive of colds. For the comfort of the inner man there was ample and good provision, but the men had been so long without "Pine Top" in superabundant supply, that when it came there was no visible reluctance in according it a prompt and cordial reception; and when, or before, twilight was absorbed in the shadows of night, a large proportion of the rank and file of the army was—well, certainly not frozen.

Upon that occasion the well-rounded canteens were swung at convenient distances, filled (but not with the pure, sweet water from the neighboring springs), and the fascinating game of "bluff," so frequently indulged in, soon engaged the attention of many quartettes, who applied themselves so assiduously to cards and canteen draughts, and with such unmistakable enjoyment, that it was apparent that their Christmas festival had begun in real, if not sober, earnest. The oft-repeated cry of "Lights out!" as it rang from mouth to mouth of the watchful sentinels did not produce the total darkness throughout the camps that usually ensued thereafter. The lights, skillfully arranged beneath dark covers of oilcloth or blanket, proved all-sufficient for the gamblers to continue their fun. Corn and coffee-grains represented their hard-earned money; whispers at intervals from the players, now fully steeped in tobacco smoke and "fire water," told in gambler's dialect: "Can't see it," "I'll raise you five," "I'll go ten better," "Three queens," and so on, until the early morning reveille startled the revelers and suspended the sport.



On Christmas Eve men who had commenced the holiday as firm, fast friends were developed by free use of whiskey into pugilists whose one idea was to fight each other. The following incident will serve to illustrate:

Two of our officers, allowing full scope to their imbibing capacities, had passed the day quietly together. As night drew on the canteen of one failed in its usefulness, affording neither taste nor smell of its late occupant. The next best remedy for relief in such emergency was to test the contents of the other canteen. The owner thereof appearing at the very moment this terrible thirst was being slaked at his expense, and not fancying the disappearance of his "goodies" through other than the one legitimate channel, insisted upon stopping the leak at once. Words that served only to increase aggravation were succeeded by blows, which continued until they knocked each other into the company street, when their colonel appeared and ordered them under arrest. The following morning, wholly oblivious of the proceedings of the night before, they were not a little surprised when told of the fight, and rather mortified at the loss of their swords. The affair was soon adjusted, however, and they were released, only to become warmer friends thereafter.

Preceded by a heavy fall of snow and hail, the atmosphere of the 25th (Christmas Day) was keenly cold, and to pedestrians not so agreeable underfoot as they would have selected, if choice had been on the program. This, however, did not materially interfere with enjoyment, and many groups of pleasant faces gathered to show their appreciation of tempting viands from the homes of fortunate comrades, or to share with chums substantial love-thoughts received from their own dear ones in familiar haunts now far away.

All who could enjoyed the day, but not all alike. To those who found more than ordinary pleasure in reverting to "other days," the, to them, seemingly "Lang Syne," pictures of home sprang up before their mental eye, pictures limned by Affection, who, rare artist, portrayed with refined skill and in minutiae the Christmas Days preceding the present: The family greeting, the interchange of gifts showered by each upon the other, some of rare design from far-away countries, some of dainty construction from a known but nameless source; the gathering of kinsfolk and friends around the family board, on which rested, but not for long, each luxury of the season. The refugee soldiers, whose devotion to our cause brought them as comrades to battle with

us, leaving their homes in possession of the enemy, watched calmly the loaded wagons, with the well-filled boxes, pass them; nothing from the dear home could reach them; but there was no murmur from them as they partook heroically of the regular camp fare, enjoying the fat turkey only in prospective.

As this, the first Christmas Day in the camp life of the Army of Northern Virginia, drew to its close, the tumults occasioned by belligerent whiskey subsided, broken noses and friendships were mended, soldiers under arrest were released, and soon the camps resumed their original orderly quietude. The arrival of the New Year was hailed by us all with pleasure, and interchange of congratulations in various forms—toasts, songs—and general hilarity filled the program of the day. "Home gatherings," as attractive as their circumstances would allow, were given by many of the captains in and around their tents, thus drawing more closely to themselves the hearts of their men. Officers and men were a unit in work for our common cause, a cause dear to each heart, and for which life's tenderest pleasures had been sacrificed, engendering a spirit of determination to yield up life itself if necessary to protect and defend that cause.

On the 30th of January, 1862, our much beloved commander, General Beauregard, was detached, and, under orders, was sent to report to the army then in Kentucky. This was a severe blow to his men for the time, as they had learned to look up to him and reverence him as a great general. January 31, 1862, the day after the promulgation of the above order, for reasons—assigned by some to the interference of the Secretary of War with troops in the field—General T. J. Jackson, commanding the Valley District, forwarded his resignation, with the request that he be returned to the Military Institute at Lexington. At the earnest solicitations of many friends and for the good of the cause, the papers were withdrawn.

#### THE SPRING CAMPAIGN, 1862

On the 7th day of March, 1862, General Hill's forces, stationed near Leesburg, Loudon County, Va., broke camp and quietly retired in the direction of Culpeper Court House. On the 9th, two days later, the main army, abandoning their pleasant winter quarters about Centreville, slowly wended its way towards the same point.

General G. B. McClellan, having been appointed to the com-

mand of the Federal army, with headquarters at Washington City, was now advancing, hence the retrograde movement of General Joseph E. Johnston's forces. Such of our stores as could not be conveniently transported, consisting principally in large quantities of bacon and flour, our general deemed it most expedient to have fired, and accordingly issued orders, which were carried out as the army fell back.

As we turn now in retrospect, and realize that the enemy was advancing too leisurely to necessitate any hurry to our rear, we feel inclined to wonder what made advisable this wholesale destruction of the staff of life.

When the middle of the month arrived, the bulk of the army was encamped in the vicinity of Orange Court House. Exposure to the inclement weather that prevailed at the time of our falling back occasioned so much sickness that many of the men were unfitted for duty; numbers were in the hospitals, many of whom, unable to rally, succumbed, and death bore them off from rank and file, beyond earthly warfare.

Colonel A. P. Hill, while in this camp, was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general, and assigned to the command of our brigade, vice General Ewell, promoted.

As the season advanced for the spring campaign to open, the ranks were filled, and the necessary preparations made for putting the army in condition for the field. At this time the morale of the troops was exceedingly good. The long interval passed in camp, where the men were untrammelled by the necessity of meeting the enemy in conflict, had been productive of unquestionable benefit, as each and all were more than anxious to be sent to the front—all were ready for the fray.

With the month of April, 1862, opened the campaign in Virginia. The red-tape dynasty of the Federal metropolis persisted in directing that General McClellan should advance and fight us wherever found, and in obedience to his instructions, the strategic commander pushed forward from the works around Washington and Alexandria in quest of his game. Finding Centreville and Manassas unoccupied and the bridge over the Rappahannock River destroyed, he then turned his attention to the transfer of his troops to the Peninsula. The authorities in Richmond, on becoming cognizant of this fact, directed our general to move his forces thither and prepare to contest the second grand onward march of the Federal army to that city.

This move on the part of the Confederates was begun on the

6th of April, or thereabout, when the roads were in such bad condition as to render them in places almost impassable. This trial, however, did not daunt the spirits of the men, who, with the fortitude of veterans, plodded on, and, with few exceptions, presented themselves in due time at the end of the day's weary march. The route pursued was by way of Louisa to Richmond. By April 20 our forces were all on the ground in front of Yorktown. General Bankhead Magruder was in charge of the Confederates, about 10,000 strong, until our arrival, when General Johnston took the helm.

On the 16th, prior to the arrival of General Johnston and his army, the troops under General Magruder became engaged in quite an exciting affair with the division of Brigadier-General W. F. Smith. The object of the enemy being to force the Confederates to discontinue the work upon the defences at the Burnt Chimneys, or Lee's Mill, and gain control of the milldam, the attack at that point was introduced by a furious booming of field guns. This uproar was continuous throughout the forenoon, though but little damage was effected.

As the afternoon was waning, the infantry formed for the attack and moved most gallantly forward. A small force, composed of several companies of a Vermont regiment, rapidly crossed the stream, below the milldam, and with hearty vim attacked our solitary piece of artillery, a six-pounder, then operating to the best of its ability against them. Under cover of a heavy artillery and musketry fire from their reserve, they succeeded in obtaining a foothold upon a small portion of our line, but, failing to receive proper support, they were compelled to relinquish it, and fell back beyond the stream, suffering heavy loss. Later on they made the effort to advance again, but reinforcements having largely increased our numbers, it proved but an easy task to repulse them. They retired to the position overlooking the milldam, that which they had attained at first, and which they continued to hold.

The Federal losses were estimated at 165 killed, wounded, and missing, while ours amounted to 75 killed and wounded. Our forces had so strongly fortified the position in their front on the Warwick that it could not be carried by direct assault; consequently, the Federal commander and his army, numbering over 100,000 men, seated themselves in front of it with the determination to reduce it by regular approaches. The total strength of our army was about 50,000 men, disposed of as

follows: Magruder on the right, Longstreet in the center, D. H. Hill on the left, and Smith the reserve.

Our men worked with a will from the time of their arrival. The fortifications were strengthened and every precautionary measure adopted to insure successful resistance to attack. With the exception of the working parties, the principal occupation of our troops consisted in watching the enemy's operations, and in dodging, when practicable, the many shells that were being thrown for their benefit. The casualties on our side, however, were not excessive during the siege. The duties were confining and the weather far from genial.

McClellan was erecting a large number of heavy Parrott guns and mortars, with which to batter down our works and drive us from the cover of our defenses, and this he would, no doubt, have accomplished had we remained there long enough. General Johnston, who usually retreated before he brought on a battle, having ascertained that the Federal batteries would be ready for the bombardment of our works on the 4th of May, most discreetly withdrew his troops from the trenches on the 3d and retired toward Richmond. The following morning the enemy gained quiet possession of our unresisting works, and immediately, in full haste, McClellan's columns were forwarded in pursuit.

Our rear was guarded by Longstreet's division, composed of as bold spirits and as warm, brave hearts as were ever banded together in an army. We reached Williamsburg at an early hour, on the morning of the 4th, after a very severe night march over roads we might well call deplorable at best, and which had not been improved by recent heavy rains. An indispensably necessary rest, after our wading operations through mud and mire were over, put us in trim for duty; and as the enemy's advance was reported near, the men were ordered under arms, and in the afternoon were deployed in line of battle between the town and the approaching foe, preparatory to checking any further forward movement on his part. The division of D. H. Hill was ordered to support us, and the artillery having been placed in the most advantageous positions, and all things being ready for the combat, the men of our army spent the night sleeping on their arms.

## THE BATTLE OF WILLIAMSBURG

As soon as the Federals came in sight on the morning of the 5th, our batteries opened fire upon them. Skirmishing occupied the early part of the day until about 10 o'clock, when our infantry moved forward and engaged the enemy in a desperate fight that lasted throughout the remainder of the day. It was one of those obstinate, bloody conflicts that are always horrifying to the reader of the annals of war. All day the rain poured incessantly, and both armies fought with stubborn tenacity. Gradually, but surely, we gained; yet there was no abatement of valor on either side. Officers and men were irreproachable in the energy with which they discharged the duties incumbent upon them, and the lifeblood of many a brave heart flowed freely upon that field on that memorable day.

Numerous instances of marvelous courage were shown among our soldiers. Many were noted by their commanders as refusing to leave the field, though painfully wounded. The Federals on our right were driven back at every point, but so slowly did they yield that, when night came, only a few miles of the country had been covered in the fight. Throughout the night we had undisturbed possession of the battlefield, and having gained our object in this battle—the safety of the army's long wagon trains—we abandoned the field and resumed the tedious march toward Richmond. Those of our men most severely wounded, and who were unable to bear the rough jolting of an army wagon over miles of rugged roads, were left in Williamsburg, and fell into the hands of the enemy. For three seemingly almost interminable days the toilsome *tramp-tramp-tramp* continued—a march that for downright hardships was seldom, if ever, equalled during the war.

The following extract is from Brigadier-General Heintzelman's appeal to General Sumner for assistance to enable him to hold his position:

We have been hard pressed all day, and nothing but the opportune arrival of General Kearney's division saved us from the loss of some of our artillery and defeat. Cannot you cut a road in front of the enemy's intrenchments by which I can be reënforced before daylight in the morning, as I fear they will make another effort to drive us back? It will require at least a division for me to hold the position against the force the enemy has to bring against me. General Hooker's division suffered so severely that I do not expect to receive

much aid from it. By cutting this road, the troops can readily join me, without having to make the large circuit by Cheesecake Church. Cannot you also attack him at daylight on his left and in your front? I fear greatly that unless he is strongly pressed I will not be able to maintain my position.

Though the enemy hugged closely in our rear, the hard knocks sustained by him on the 5th suggested careful movements and the prudence of keeping at a respectful distance. It was not pastime with the "bull dog warrior" Longstreet; for he had used his fangs with unmistakable earnestness, and they had cut severely.

We quote from General Longstreet's official report:

This battle was a very handsome affair, and the able brigadiers and the officers and soldiers under them are entitled to all the honors due to distinguished gallantry and zeal.

My part in the battle was comparatively simple and easy, that of placing the troops in proper position at proper times. The conduct of the whole affair is due to the officers and soldiers. I have never seen troops go into action in better order, better spirits, or with more enthusiasm. The order was preserved throughout the day, as well as the spirit, and after a long day's battle, lasting until quite dark, and with a heavy rain pouring down, our regiments were brought from the field in as good order as from an ordinary day's march, some of the brigades marching back with complete organization.

The brigades of Generals C. M. Wilcox and A. P. Hill were long and hotly engaged. Ably led by those commanders, they drove the enemy from every position. The latter brigade,<sup>1</sup> from its severe loss, must have been in the thickest of the fight. Its organization was perfect throughout the battle, and it was marched off the field in as good order as it entered it.

General A. P. Hill, commanding brigade, says:

My own brigade was actively and constantly engaged in the front for seven hours. Many of my men fired over 60 rounds of cartridges, and for two hours longer we were lying passive under a heavy fire, ready to spring to it again should the enemy rally to the fight. We drove the enemy from every position he took, captured all his knapsacks, and never suffered him to regain an inch of lost ground. My own brigade was fortunate in taking seven

<sup>1</sup> Composed of the First, Seventh, Eleventh, and Seventeenth Virginia Infantry.

stands of colors, about 160 prisoners, and shared with the Ninth Alabama the honor of taking eight pieces of artillery.

General J. E. B. Stuart, who was on the field, thus speaks of the engagement:

The artillery thus gave most essential aid to our infantry in their advance of triumph over every position the enemy took until he was utterly routed. Antecedent to the rout, however, occurrences of importance should be narrated, for which I, from a standpoint observing the entire field, had peculiar facilities

The tide of battle rolled very perceptibly before these veteran brigades as soon as they were fairly engaged, and my volunteer aide [Captain Farley], who was in the entire fight, speaks in the highest terms of the heroic courage and fighting tact of the Eleventh and Seventeenth Virginia, of Hill's brigade, and also of the Ninth Alabama and Nineteenth Mississippi.

The casualties resulting from the battle of Williamsburg are thus enumerated:

Of the killed, wounded, and missing on the Union side there were 2239, and of the Confederates 1500. The Union forces engaged on this occasion consisted of 36 regiments of infantry and five batteries, aggregating 12,000 men. Of the Confederates there were 27 regiments of infantry and five batteries, aggregating 9,000 men.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE FIGHT AT ELTHAM'S LANDING

It was on the 7th of May that the fight at Eltham's Landing occurred as our forces were on the march towards Richmond. The locality is at the head of York River, opposite West Point. A portion of General Franklin's corps of Unionists had landed the previous evening, and thrown out their pickets for several miles toward Barhamsville. Our army was passing this village, and, finding it such very slow work to get the wagons and artillery ahead, owing to the unfavorable condition of the roads, General G. W. Smith was instructed to halt until the rear troops could be brought forward, and orders were given to General Whiting to make such disposition of his division as would cover the trains in event of a nearer approach of the enemy. But finding that the enemy had no intention of leaving the protection

<sup>1</sup> *Official Reports.*



of his gunboats for this purpose, an attempt was determined upon to move close enough to enable us to shell his transports on the river. With this purpose in view, we advanced a few regiments, and, after passing through the dense forest and encountering the enemy's pickets—whom, after a short contest, we drove in—we gained a clear space nearer the river. This point, however, was quite too far for our guns to play effectively upon the Federal transports, so orders were judiciously issued for our troops to retire. For a while it was a pretty lively engagement, and the enemy sustained severe loss during the time occupied in driving them back. General Hood's brigade, supported by the Hampton Legion, bore the brunt of the fight.

Federal loss, 186; Confederate loss, 40.

#### THE CITY OF SEVEN HILLS

On the 9th, reaching a point not far from the Long Bridge, we arranged a temporary camp and occupied it. The Southern Army had gathered around the "City of Seven Hills" to defend it, and, in accord with this purpose, took possession of the hills and fields between the outer works and the lazy, snake-like Chickahominy River, and converted them into camping grounds. The enemy, having reached the end of his tether, spread along the banks of the river, basking in the sunshine of great expectation, with battle flags planted and unfurled to the breeze, and tents well pitched. In front of him the eagle eye of our astute commander vigilantly watched his every movement, with the determined purpose of embracing the earliest opportunity to swoop down upon him.

Richmond, the capital and largest city in the State, is located on the north bank of the James River, ninety-five miles, or thereabout, southwest of Washington City. Its natural defences are generally good, as the James River covers the approach on two sides, while the Chickahominy, with its numerous swamps, serves to protect those upon the other sides.

When McClellan's army advanced to the Peninsula in April a considerable panic was created among the inhabitants of Richmond and the vicinity. As the seat of the Confederate States' government it was the goal for which the invader's legions were spurred, hence, natural apprehension arose lest its capture should be effected; but there was no inertia when activity was required. On the 21st of April, Congress, then in session, adjourned, the

archives of the government were securely packed for removal, and every preparation requisite was made in the event of the evacuation of the city becoming necessary. The withdrawal of the Confederate troops from about Yorktown, the abandonment of Norfolk, and the destruction of the *Merrimac* by order of its commander, had all tended to increase the excitement and alarm of non-combatants.

The State Legislature, however, promptly decided that the city should be defended to the utmost at all hazards; in consequence of which the militia were enrolled without delay, and formed into companies and regiments. Each able-bodied male resident—citizen, merchant, and official—held himself in readiness to shoulder his musket. Orders were issued to suspend business at 2:00 p. m., to meet at 3 o'clock for drill, which was to be continued until sunset. General Robert E. Lee, the greatest of Southern heroes, known at that time to but few as the possessor of the rarest qualities for military renown, was "Military Adviser to the President," and to him were entrusted the defenses of the city.

Through the evacuation of Norfolk, after the fall of Yorktown, the James River was entirely open for the enemy's gunboats in their approach to the capital, so the first work to be undertaken and vigorously pushed was the formation of defenses and obstructions that would forestall his purpose.

When the 15th of May arrived, so unfaltering had been the activity of General Lee and soldiers that the earthworks and battery, with the obstructions in the river at Drury's Bluff, were so far completed as to be available for successful defense. That was the day upon which the Federal fleet, comprising the ironclad *Galena*, *Naygatuck* and *Monitor*, with two gunboats, made their appearance and attempted to force a passage. They were handled in masterly style and fought with true gallantry. One of the vessels ran up to within a few hundred yards of our battery and opened fire upon it from its powerful guns. A well-contested and most spirited battle ensued, during which the five guns of the land battery were managed with unmistakable skill, the enemy were repulsed, and victory rested with the Confederates. The *Galena* was so disabled as to render her unfit for further service, while the other boats were all more or less damaged. The injury sustained by the battery was very slight. This proved the material advantages of earthworks over ironclads.

Richmond had become the rendezvous of people from all sec-

tions of the country. All grades were represented, from the earnest sympathizer in the cause of the South to the vultures of speculation, whose greed found victims in any or all upon whom they could pounce, whether citizen or soldier, widow or orphan. To these sheep-clad wolves, both native and imported, may in some measure be attributed the downfall of the Southern Confederacy. There is no opprobrium applying to fraud and extortion in their most unrighteous phases too scathing to adorn their record. The vocation best suited to their purpose was the one selected and plied while venting their criticisms upon the skill of a general or the result of a battle, as they "scented the danger from afar."

## CHAPTER VII

THE AFFAIR NEAR HANOVER COURT HOUSE. MAY, 1862

OUR army, under the command of General Joseph E. Johnston, had spread its tents within a few miles of the city of Richmond, with its lines extending thus: the right from Drury's Bluff, on the James; the left to the Chickahominy, above the New Bridge. The total force present for active duty was about 50,000 men.

While we were busily engaged strengthening the lines of defense, and at the same time recruiting as quietly as practicable, to be well prepared for the enemy's advance against the capital, General McClellan was zealously maturing his plans, by the magical power of which he fondly hoped and believed he would entrap and crush us by a single blow. "Man proposes, but God disposes," and truly the elements at His bidding wrought favorably for us. The surface of the earth became so softened by heavy, continuous rains, that the Federal army essayed in vain to turn a wheel, so literally was it mired; and to add still further to the discomfort of the situation, fever and ague and other malarial diseases arising from the miasma of the swamps that surrounded the camps, seized upon the soldiers, rendering thousands of them *hors de combat*.

As the period for active, energetic service approached—the time at which every man's best efforts would be required, and every nerve of the army stretched to the utmost tension to force back the numerically superior forces of our antagonists—strict orders were issued and stringent measures adopted to keep the soldiers within the bounds of the camp. All roads leading into the city were carefully guarded, and a major-general's pass was required to effect an entrance. Sentinels patrolled the streets of the city, fully empowered with authority to enforce regulations; therefore, running the blockade under these circumstances was far from an easy feat. The gauntlet, however, was often run, regardless of distance or danger, because, forsooth, bright eyes watched for, and sweet smiles awaited the soldier boy's

coming to greet his fair friends; for where in all the assortment of Johnny Rebs was one, the pulsations of whose heart were not quickened by these magnetic influences? And in proportion to the quickening pulse so much the more were the powers of locomotion tested when the goal was Richmond, our beautiful Modern Rome, famous then, as now, for the loveliness of her noble daughters.

Skillful manœuvering was an indispensable accomplishment in effecting, without detection, this exhilarating exploit. For example, when the night was dark and one was cognizant of where the guards were posted (and their positions were frequently changed), it was an easy walk-over until the metropolis was reached; then came the rub. Not only were sentinels alert on each corner of the various streets, but squads of men patrolled between them who desired no better fun than the opportunity of catching such poor fellows and putting them in limbo. Consequently, many of the unsophisticated were grabbed up and treated to not only a view of the Old Libby but a rest therein. The "old stager," however, sniffed danger from afar, and was seldom caught, for, having familiarized himself with every byway and alley in the city, he availed himself of their utility, or shielded his person in some friendly doorway until an advancing file of men had passed and he was free to pursue his way.

When the night was bright, as was often the case, the dark side of the street, or a passing vehicle, screened him from observation. Sometimes a bold front and proud military bearing were necessarily assumed, which, united with a quick step and a prompt and pleasant military salute in passing a guard, would perhaps, nine times out of ten, make the sentry front face, present arms, and wonder whether it was the Governor, or the general commanding, that had just passed.

On the 24th of May a portion of the Federal army crossed the Chickahominy and was placed in position not far from Fair Oaks Station, on the York River Railroad. On the following morning General Casey's division was advanced to a point known as Seven Pines, about a mile and a half nearer Richmond; they there encamped and commenced fortifying, their lines reaching across the Williamsburg road. As soon as our general was notified of this advance he ordered a reconnaissance of the position, which fully and speedily developed the location of the enemy's lines. On the 30th, General Johnston issued orders for an attack to be made the following morning, in hopeful anticipa-

tion of defeating one wing of the antagonistic forces before any support could cross the river to its rescue.

Before proceeding with further details, let us review the affair that occurred on the 27th of May, in the vicinity of Hanover Court House, the extreme left of the Confederate position.

The Unionists, consisting of Morrell's division, a brigade under command of Warren, Butterfield's brigade, two regiments of cavalry, and numerous batteries of artillery, the whole commanded by General Fitz-John Porter, supported by Sykes' division of regulars, passed out of their camps early on the morning of the 27th and advanced in the direction of Hanover Court House. One brigade of our troops, with a small number of cavalry pickets, was at this time on duty at Slash Church, in the neighborhood of the Court House. In order to give as correct and condensed an account as is requisite for these pages, we submit from the reports of the commanding generals the following extracts: The Federal commander, General Porter, says:

Amidst a pelting storm of rain, through deep mud and water, the command struggled and pushed its way to Peake's Station, on the Virginia Central Railroad, 2 miles from Hanover Court House, where we came in presence of the enemy.

Here preparations were at once made for battle by sending forward as skirmishers on the direct road to Hanover Court House the Twenty-fifth New York Volunteers, Colonel Johnson, and Berdan's Sharpshooters, to engage the enemy's skirmishers and to hold him in check while Morrell's division, slowly pushing through the swampy roads, could be brought up and deployed under the protection of a portion of Benson's battery, which was thrown into position so as to sweep the road.

In the meantime a squadron of cavalry and a section of artillery, supported by other cavalry, was sent to the left on the Ashland Road, to guard our flank and to destroy the railroad and telegraph at the crossing. This force soon became engaged with a portion of the enemy apparently attempting to outflank us. On the arrival of Martindale's brigade I dispatched it to support the last-mentioned force, confident that we could, with Johnson, Berdan, and Benson, hold the enemy in front until another brigade could be formed. Butterfield, soon coming up, formed his regiments and moved them in two lines, under the protection of woods and wheat fields immediately in front of the enemy, where he placed them until he could ascertain the position of the enemy. This done, he moved rapidly to the front, covered by skirmishers, driving the enemy before him, and capturing one piece of artillery and many prisoners. The enemy here having been put to flight, and one body of them seen

moving in the direction of Hanover Court House, the cavalry, with the light artillery, was sent in pursuit. In the meantime the infantry was formed in readiness to move to a point where I knew the enemy had been camped. At this time Colonel Warren's command joined, having been delayed in repairing bridges destroyed by the enemy.

Learning that the retreating force had been seen moving toward our right, I directed Martindale to collect his brigade and move up the railroad, by which route he would fall in rear of the place before mentioned as the former location of the enemy's camp. At the same time I directed Colonel Warren to push on with his cavalry and destroy the public and private bridges across the Pamunkey east of the railroad. I immediately put the rest of the command in motion in direction of Hanover Court House, but had scarcely reached that point with the head of the column when I received information from a signal officer that the enemy were appearing in our rear.

The command was immediately faced about and marched back (left in front) to the former battle-field, where I found a portion of Martindale's brigade contending against great odds. Morrell's brigade (Colonel McQuade commanding), which was not up at the first action, was thrown upon the enemy in front and flank. A portion of Butterfield's brigade, under his immediate direction, hearing the sound of musketry, had taken the shortest route from the advanced point it had reached, and also moved toward the rear of the enemy. These supports, pushing rapidly upon him, drove him from his position on the road toward Ashland, and was followed in pursuit till darkness put a stop to the operations for the day.

Captain Harrison, of the Fifth Cavalry, took two armed companies of the Twenty-eighth North Carolina Regiment and Rush's cavalry one company.

We now quote from General Branch's Confederate report:

I moved my camp on Monday last from Hanover Court House to Slash Church. The position was selected because, while fulfilling other requirements, it was at the mouth of a road leading to Ashland, which assured me a means of retreat if assailed by the large forces of the enemy in close proximity to my front. I took up the position with a knowledge of its dangers, and all of my arrangements were made accordingly. No baggage train encumbered me, and my command bivouacked Monday night, infantry supports being thrown out for the cavalry pickets.

Tuesday morning the enemy were reported to be advancing on the road to Taliaferro's Mill, and I sent Colonel [James H.] Lane, with his own regiment [Twenty-eighth North Carolina] and a section of [A. C.] Latham's battery, to support the pickets and repel any small party. At the same time Colonel [Thomas] Hardeman's

regiment [Fifty-fifth Georgia] was sent to repair the railroad at Ashcake, where it had been obstructed by the enemy the day before, and watch any approach of the enemy on that road.

About the middle of the day the enemy opened fire from a battery near Peake's Crossing. Latham's battery soon got into position to reply, and, after a sharp action, silenced it. In the meantime a severe cannonade had been going on in the direction of Lane, showing that he, too, had been attacked. As soon as the battery in the road had been driven off I sent Colonel [Charles C.] Lee, with his own (the Thirty-seventh) and the Eighteenth [Col. Robert H. Cowan's] regiments to reënforce him. When these two regiments had proceeded about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles, the enemy was found strongly posted across the road. On learning this, I galloped forward (leaving orders for Latham to follow as quickly as possible), and was informed by Colonel Lee that the force of the enemy consisted of two regiments of infantry and some artillery. My plan was quickly formed and orders were given for its execution. Lee, with the Thirty-seventh, was to push through the woods and get close on the right flank of the battery. Hoke, as soon as he should return from a sweep through the woods on which I had sent him, and Colonel [Benjamin O.] Wade's [Twelfth North Carolina] regiment were to make a similar movement to the left flank of the battery, and Cowan was to charge across the open ground in front, Latham meantime bringing all his guns to bear on their front. Hoke, supported by Colonel Wade, had a sharp skirmish in the woods, taking 6 prisoners and 11 horses, but came out too late to make the movement assigned him, and Lee having sent for reënforcements, I so changed my plan as to abandon the attack on the enemy's left, and sent Lieutenant-Colonel Hoke to reënforce Colonel Lee, relying on the front and right flank attack. Colonel Cowan, with the Eighteenth, made the charge most gallantly; but the enemy's force was much larger than had been supposed and strongly posted, and the gallant Eighteenth was compelled to seek shelter. It continued to pour heavy volleys from the edge of the woods, and must have done great execution. The steadiness with which this desperate charge was made reflects the highest credit on officers and men. The Thirty-seventh found the undergrowth so dense as to retard its progress; but when it reached its position, poured a heavy and destructive fire upon the enemy. This combined attack of the Eighteenth and Thirty-seventh compelled the enemy to leave his battery for a time and take shelter behind a ditch bank.

For two hours the cavalry pickets had been coming in from the Ashcake road reporting a heavy force of the enemy passing around my right by that road, and Col. B. H. Robertson, of the Virginia cavalry, who was near Hanover Court House, had sent me repeated messages to the effect that a heavy body from that direction was



threatening my line of retreat. I had already learned that my brigade was engaged with an entire division in its front, but continued the contest in the hope that the cannonade would attract to me some reënforcements; taking the precaution, however, to keep R. P. Campbell's [Seventh North Carolina] and Hardeman's [Forty-fifth Georgia] regiments in hand to cover the retreat in case my expectations should not be realized. Finding I could remain no longer without being surrounded, and hearing of no reënforcements, and feeling assured from the firing that Lane had made good his retreat to Hanover Court House, I determined to draw off. This, always difficult in the presence of a superior enemy, was rendered comparatively easy by the precaution I had taken not to engage my whole force.

Campbell was ordered to place the Seventh across the road, so as to receive the enemy if they should attempt to follow. Orders were then sent to Lee and Cowan to withdraw in order. They were hotly engaged when the order was received, but promptly withdrew. Colonel Cowan, in an especial manner, attracted my attention by the perfect order in which he brought out his regiment, notwithstanding the severe and long-continued fire he had sustained from both infantry and artillery. The regiments marched to the rear without haste or confusion, and went up the Ashland road. A cautious attempt was made by the enemy to follow, but a single volley from the rear guard of the Seventh arrested it. The march was continued without interruption to Ashland, where I was ordered by General Johnston to report to Major-General Hill. All my subsequent movements having been under orders received from him in person, they need not be detailed.

The officers and men of my command conducted themselves in a very handsome manner both in the engagement and on the march. The enemy may have captured stragglers enough to offset the prisoners we took from them in the open field, but they took no body of my troops. Twice during the day the enemy were driven back, the last time taking shelter behind a ditch bank at the edge of the woods. From this position I did not succeed in driving them.

Casualties: Federal, 355; Confederate, 265. There is no report of any missing.

## CHAPTER VIII

THE BATTLE OF SEVEN PINES. MAY, 1862

FROM sunset until midnight of the 30th of May one of the severest storms of the season raged with unrelenting fury. Intensely vivid lightning, succeeded by heavy peals of thunder, accompanied the downpour of rain and the lashing wind, whose keen, searching blasts penetrated everywhere, rendering sleep an impossibility. The soldiers were subjected to great discomfort, their camps deluged, and extreme darkness prevailing, except when electric flashes illumined the heavens. As the storm was abating, and the poor fellows were endeavoring to compose themselves for a wee bit of nap, couriers came dashing hither and thither at breakneck speed, and soon the Confederate camps were all astir. The long roll beat and the repeated cry, "Turn out! Turn out!" rang clearly on the midnight air. The order for preparation of two days' rations, and for all to be in readiness to move at a moment's notice, was read to the troops. Then came the efforts to cook these rations; and a time of trial it was, as the fires, having succumbed to the stronger force of water, were all extinct and the fuel so thoroughly soaked that to rekindle it in haste was a sheer impossibility. Consequently this part of the program was finally relinquished. Rays of the silver sheen of Aurora's fair garb were beginning to glimmer above the eastern horizon when the drums sounded calling the men into line, and columns, regiments, brigades, and divisions were in a little while moving quietly away. The fresh, pure air we inhaled and the sight that greeted us as we passed noiselessly around the suburbs of Richmond were truly inspiring: The small streams were swollen into mimic rivers, and as we splashed into them, waist-deep, there was no thought wasted upon personal discomfort.

We pressed on with alacrity, all keenly alive to the importance of prompt action. The positions to be attained by the moving thousands were as follows: Longstreet and D. H. Hill were to post their forces on the Williamsburg Road, fronting Casey's

Camp; Huger's division was to take its place at the right of Longstreet, and Smith's division was assigned to move by the Nine-mile Road, to be ready to prevent reinforcements from coming across the river. The reserve force consisted of Magruder's division. The Confederate left was to be occupied by A. P. Hill, and the extreme left by the cavalry. General Longstreet, with his own division and that of D. H. Hill, was delegated to begin the attack, with the forces on the right and left to serve as a support to him.

The Chickahominy was so swollen by the furious storm of the preceding night, that it was not fordable, in consequence of which opportunity was afforded the Confederates to strike an effective blow, since two corps of the Federal army were temporarily isolated. Unfortunately, however, this advantage was not taken advantage of, because of the precious time consumed by laggards in falling into position. There is great reason to feel assured that if the attack could have been made at early dawn, as intended by our commander, the corps of Generals Heintzelman and Keys might have been "bagged."

It was not quite one o'clock, perhaps ten minutes thereto, in the afternoon, when the first gun from our side led off, and the battle was opened. Hill's division, with its center on the Williamsburg road, advanced to the attack; the second line was composed of three brigades of Longstreet's division, and the whole force was under that general's command.

The first of the enemy encountered was a long line of skirmishers, supported by five or six regiments of infantry, their front under protection of an abatis. Being superior in numbers, not much time was required by us in driving them back upon their main line, whose works consisted of rifle pits and a redoubt shielded by an abatis. At that point the fight was most stubbornly maintained, and as there was no abatement in the determined courage of our adversaries, it required time and skill to dislodge them from their stronghold. At length, however, by united efforts of infantry and artillery—the former charging through an open field, under a destructive fire, the enemy's left, while an attack was made upon the flank under the skillful eye of General Hill—success crowned our exertions. The enemy, after being ejected from his works, fell back upon his reserves, and reinforcements having arrived for his relief just in the nick of time, he labored strenuously to regain his lost position. In this aim he would possibly have succeeded but for the timely

appearance of three of Longstreet's brigades—the commands of Anderson, Wilcox, and Kemper—which turned the tide so effectually that our foes retired, under warm protest, to the swamps.

Hard fighting and a flank movement made on the enemy's left by General Raleigh E. Colston's brigade achieved this victory for us. Our brigade having double-quickened by fours, left in front, with flank exposed to the scathing fire of Uncle Sam's best gunners, our loss was unavoidably heavy. This charge closed the battle for the day on that portion of the field, our men holding the front, and standing in water from one to three feet in depth until far into the night, when they were relieved.

The Union general, McClellan, claimed a great victory and seemed much elated; but his boastful declarations were never put into execution. In his dispatch to the Secretary of War, dated 12 p. m., June 2, he says in part:

The enemy attacked in force and with great spirit yesterday morning, but are everywhere most signally repulsed with great loss. Our troops charged frequently on both days, and uniformly broke the enemy.

The result is that our left is now within 4 miles of Richmond. I only wait for the river to fall to cross with the rest of the force and make a general attack. Should I find them holding firm in a very strong position, I may wait for what troops I can bring up from Fort Monroe, but the morale of my troops is now such that I can venture much, and do not fear for odds against me. The victory is complete, and all credit is due to the gallantry of our officers and men.

As a comparison to the above we quote from the report of Brigadier-General Henry M. Naglee, commanding First Brigade, Fourth Corps:

That the brigade fought well none can deny, for they lost 638 of their number; their bodies were found over every part of the field and where these bodies lay were found double their number of the enemy. The enemy, more generous than our friends, admit that we fought most desperately and against three entire divisions of his army, with two in reserve that later in the day were brought in. For three and a half hours we contested every inch of ground with the enemy, and did not yield in that time the half of one mile. We fought from 12 m. until 3.30 p. m. with but little assistance, and until dark with our comrades of other regiments and of other di-

visions whenever we could be of service, and when, at dark, the enemy swept all before him, we were the last to leave the field.

Since the battle of Seven Pines, now nearly three weeks, a force ten times that of Casey and Couch has not been able to regain the line of outposts established by the First Brigade on the 26th of May, our present line being half a mile in rear thereof.

Comment is unnecessary. Again he says:

Afterward they crossed to the left of Couch's position, and advanced 200 yards into and along the woods to the left and in front of the Seven Pines, where they remained actively employed until near dark, when the enemy, advancing rapidly in masses to the rear of the Nine-mile Road, inclined toward the Williamsburg Road, sweeping everything from the field, our forces making one general, simultaneous movement to the rear, which did not stop until all had arrived at the line of defence, 1 mile in that direction.

Of the desperate fighting, he says:

Volley after volley was given and received. An order was given to charge, but 100 yards brought us into such close proximity with the enemy that a sheet of fire was blazing in our faces. The ranks on both sides were rapidly thinning, but still the great disparity in our numbers continued. So close were the contending forces that our men in many instances while at a charge poured their fire into the breasts of the enemy within a few feet from the points of their bayonets.

Brigadier-General S. P. Heintzelman's report contains the following account:

On the next day, the 31st, the forenoon was quiet. About 1 p. m. I first heard firing, more than there had been for several days. I sent Lieutenants Hunt and Johnson, two of my aides, to the front to learn what it was. At 2 p. m. I received a note from Lieutenant Jackson, of General Keyes' staff, informing me that the enemy were pressing them very hard, especially on the railroad, and asking me to send two brigades, if I had them at hand to spare. On this I sent orders for a brigade to advance up the railroad as a support. The one selected by General Kearney was General Birney's brigade.

Lieutenants Hunt and Johnson returned about 2:30 p. m., having seen General Keyes, by whom they were directed to report that his front line, which was held by Casey's division, was being driven in.

The road from the front was at this time filled with fugitives.

I mounted my horse and rode briskly to the front. At the corner of the field, not a third of a mile from my headquarters, I saw the fugitives from the battle-field increasing in numbers as I advanced. On reaching the front I met our troops fiercely engaged with the enemy near Seven Pines, having lost the first position, three-fourths of a mile in advance. General Keyes was there, and from him I learned the position of affairs. The fire had increased so much that I went to the left, to order two of General Peck's regiments from where they were guarding a road leading from White Oak Swamp to support this line. I met them coming, having been ordered across by General Keyes. They went into the woods, but, together with the troops already there, were driven out by the overwhelming masses of the enemy. Couch's, Casey's, and Kearny's divisions on the field numbered but 18,500 men. Deducting from his force Casey's division, 5,000,—dispersed when I came on the field,—and Birney's 2,300,—not engaged,—we, with less than 11,000 men, after a struggle of three and a half hours, checked the enemy's heavy masses. General Naglee, who is highly commended for his gallantry and activity, has not yet sent in his regimental reports.

Brigadier-General Kearny says:

This was perhaps near 6 o'clock, when our center and right, defended by troops of the other divisions, with all their willingness, could no longer resist the enemy's right central flank attacks, pushed on with determined discipline and with the impulsion of numerous concentrated masses. Once broken, our troop fled incontinently, and a dense body of the enemy, pursuing rapidly, yet in order, occupied the Williamsburg road, the entire open ground, and penetrating deep into the woods on either side, soon interposed between my division and my line of retreat.

Brigadier-General E. D. Keyes, commanding the Fourth Corps, thus speaks of the retreat from the position near General Casey's headquarters:

After seeing the Tenth Massachusetts and the adjoining line well at work under a murderous fire, I observed that that portion of the line 150 yards to my left was crumbling away, some falling and others retiring. I perceived also that the artillery had withdrawn, and that large bodies of broken troops were leaving the center and moving down the Williamsburg Road to the rear. Assisted by Captain Suydam, my assistant adjutant-general, Captain de Villarceau, and Lieutenants Jackson and Smith, of my staff, I tried in vain to check the retreating current.

Brigadier-General I. N. Palmer says:

Shortly after this the divisions of Kearny and Hooker arrived, but not until the enemy had possession of the position where the engagement commenced, and which they continued to possess until they chose to retire, which was on Monday morning, more than thirty hours after the battle.

General Joseph E. Johnston, commanding the Confederate forces, says:

The principal attack was made by Major-General Longstreet with his own and Major-General D. H. Hill's divisions, the latter mostly in advance. Hill's brave troops, admirably commanded and most gallantly led, forced their way through the abatis, which formed the enemy's external defences, and stormed their intrenchments by a determined and irresistible rush. Such was the manner in which the enemy's first line was carried. The operation was repeated with the same gallantry and success, as our troops pursued their victorious career through the enemy at successive camps and intrenchments. At each new position they encountered fresh troops belonging to it and reënforcements brought on from the rear. Thus they had to repel repeated efforts to retake works which they had carried; but their advance was never successfully resisted. Their onward movement was only staid by the coming of night.

Major-General Longstreet has the following in his report:

The entire division of General Hill became engaged about 3 o'clock, and drove the enemy steadily back, gaining possession of his abatis and part of his intrenched camp; General Rodes, by a movement to the right, driving in the enemy's left.

The only reënforcements on the field in hand were my own brigades, of which Anderson's, Wilcox's, and Kemper's were put in by the front on the Williamsburg Road, and Colston's and Pryor's by my right flank,—Colston's, just in time to turn the enemy's flank. At the same time the decided and gallant attack made by the other brigades gained entire possession of the enemy's position, with his artillery, camp equipage, etc. Anderson's brigade, under Colonel Jenkins, pressing forward rapidly, continued to drive the enemy until nightfall.

The severest part of the work was done by Maj.-Gen. D. H. Hill's division; but the attack of the two brigades under Gen. R. H. Anderson,—one commanded by Colonel Kemper (now brigadier-general), the other by Colonel M. Jenkins,—was made with such spirit and regularity as to have driven back the most determined foe. This decided the day in our favor.

General D. H. Hill in his report says :

We had now captured eight pieces of artillery, the camp, tents, and stores of a brigade, and had successfully driven the Yankees back  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles forcing them to abandon a wide skirt of abatis, rifle-pits, and redoubts. My division had beaten Casey's division and all the reënforcements brought him, and had driven him and his supports into the woods and swamps. It was desirable, however, to press the Yankees as close as possible. I therefore sent back to General Longstreet and asked for another brigade. In a few minutes the magnificent brigade of R. H. Anderson came to my support. A portion of this force, under Colonel Jenkins, consisting of the Palmetto Sharpshooters and the Sixth South Carolina, was sent on the extreme left to scour along the railroad, and Nine-mile road, and thus get in rear of the enemy, while a portion, under General Anderson in person, was sent on the immediate left of the redoubt, into the woods,—where the Yankees had hid after being repulsed by the fire of Carter's battery and captured guns,—under the direction of General Rodes. The Yankees permitted Gen. R. H. Anderson to get within a few yards of them, when they opened a murderous fire upon him from their cover in the woods. His heroes replied with interest, and some guns, which were brought to enfilade the Yankee lines, added to their confusion, and they were soon in full retreat

I now resolved to drive the Yankees out of the woods on the right of the road, where they were still in strong force. General Rains was near them, and a written order was carried him by my adjutant to move farther to the right. I regret that that gallant and meritorious officer did not advance farther in that direction. He would have taken the Yankees in flank, and the direct attack of Rodes in front would have been less bloody. The magnificent brigade of Rodes moved over the open ground to assault the Yankees strongly posted in the woods. He met a most galling fire, and his advance was checked. A portion of his command met with a disastrous repulse. Kemper's brigade was now sent me by General Longstreet, and directed by me to move directly to the support of Rodes. This brigade, however, did not engage the Yankees, and Rodes' men were badly cut up. By nightfall, nevertheless, the Yankees were driven out of the woods; and we held undisputed possession of all the ground a mile around and in advance of the redoubt, which had been the object of the struggle.

It is but doing justice to General Kemper's brigade to correct a misapprehension on the part of General D. H. Hill in regard to the part taken by that brigade in the closing scenes of that



memorable day. Reference is made to that part of his report where he says:

This brigade, however, did not engage the Yankees, and Rodes' men were badly cut up.

General Rodes, in his report, says:

Just after the Twelfth Alabama had fallen back, and about an hour after the brigade had assumed its most advanced position, during which time it had been under constant fire of musketry, reinforcements commenced to arrive, and in assisting General Kemper to place his brigade, so that it could move forward to relieve my advance regiments, which by this time had been under fire fully three hours, I received a wound in the arm, which in a short time became so painful as to compel me to turn over the command of the brigade to Colonel Gordon, of the Sixth Alabama.

The following extracts, as copied from the official reports of the colonel commanding the Seventeenth Virginia (of Kemper's brigade) will show the part sustained by it in this battle:

At 4 o'clock p. m. I moved my regiment by the left flank, following the Eleventh (of same brigade) in double-quick time for one and a half miles down the Williamsburg Road, passing for five hundred yards under a heavy artillery and infantry fire, to a wood-pile to the left of the Barker House, where we halted for a few minutes to close up the ranks and permit the men to recover breath. The Eleventh was soon put in motion. I followed by the left flank, filing to the right in front of the redoubt and in rear of the Barker House and the enemy's camp, and the open space beyond, encountering a galling infantry fire from the enemy stationed in the edge of the woods, and meeting numbers of our own troops falling back, which prevented me from presenting a compact line to the enemy. After advancing some distance, I received an order to fall back and reform behind the trenches, which was done in tolerably good order, which position we held until near night-fall, holding the enemy in check until they were driven from their position.

The regiment was then reformed with the brigade, and moved forward through the enemy's camp and occupied the woods beyond, from which they had been driven. About 9 o'clock p. m. we were withdrawn, and bivouacked a mile to the right and rear of the position occupied by the brigade in the afternoon.

In the advance into the enemy's camp, Color Corporal Morrill was struck down, wounded in three places, and rose upon his elbow to cheer the men forward. The colors were caught by Capt. Ray-

mond Fairfax, Company I, and handed to Color Corporal Diggs, who instantly fell wounded; they were then taken by Private Harper, Company E, who retained them until the close of the day. Sergeant-Major Francis fell mortally wounded some distance in advance of the regiment; Sergeant Basey, Company F, was killed while gallantly charging the enemy far in advance of the Regiment. Lieut. Wm. Gray was killed while bravely cheering his men on. Captain Knox, Company G; Captain Fowle, Company H, and Captain Burke, Company D, were wounded while leading their companies. Lieutenant Adie was wounded while gallantly doing his duty. Lieut. Thos. V Fitzhugh received a wound while passing through a shower of lead, in the voluntary act of carrying an order to Colonel Moore, of the — Alabama Regiment; Major Herbert was wounded while passing through a sheet of fire to take charge, by your order, of some companies of Colonel Moore's regiment, to the right and rear of our position, having volunteered for the service, Colonel Moore having previously fallen desperately wounded; Colonel Marye acted with his usual gallantry.

It gives me great pleasure to say that I was well and bravely sustained by my company officers. I could record many instances of distinguished courage among the non-commissioned officers and men, but for fear of leaving out some who are really deserving, I shall merely say that, with very few exceptions, they all did their duty faithfully and well.

The other regiments of Kemper's brigade did their duty as well as the Seventeenth, if not better, and the long list of killed and wounded, whose numbers far exceeded those of the battle of Williamsburg, proves beyond all doubt that they were hotly engaged and that they held the enemy in check until flanked by another brigade of General Longstreet's division. These are not only facts, but the enemy's colors in rear of the camp were cut down three times in succession by a member of the writer's company, a fact that can be testified to by a number of living witnesses.

In the meantime, about 4 o'clock p. m., the troops under General Smith advanced rapidly along the Nine Mile road, against the enemy's right, and striking a skirmish line, drove it in; then, continuing the advance, they encountered artillery and infantry near Fair Oaks, where they engaged in a very spirited contest which was protracted throughout the afternoon and evening, until darkness forced them to desist, without either side having acquired an advantage. General Smith's antagonists at that point were composed of troops belonging to the corps of

General Sumner, who had laid pontoons over the heavy swell of the river and crossed to the support of their comrades-in-arms. Nothing can be truthfully said derogatory to the bravery displayed by the men of either section throughout the first day's fight on this hotly contested field.

As to the fighting on the left, the following extracts from General G. W. Smith's report are given:

The generals of brigades, colonels, and other commanding officers were laboring under great disadvantages, the thickness of the woods and undergrowth and the smoke preventing them from seeing more than a very limited number of their men at any one time, while the roar of musketry was almost deafening. Very seldom, if ever, did any troops in their first battle go so close up to a covered line under so strong a fire and remain within such short distance so long a time.

Various attempts were made to charge the enemy, but without that concert of action almost absolutely necessary to success, and the gallant spirits who attempted it were very many of them shot down, when the rest would fall back into the line and resume the firing. On no part of the line where I was did the enemy at any time leave their cover or advance one single foot. Our troops held their position close to the enemy's line until it was too dark to distinguish friend from foe. I retired among the last, came off slowly, and was not interfered with by the enemy in any manner.

In this engagement, which lasted about an hour and a half, the four brigades of my division lost in killed, wounded, and missing 1,283, of whom 164 were killed, 1,010 wounded, and 109 missing.

Most solemnly quiet were the early hours of the day succeeding the battle of Seven Pines. Our wounded ones had been removed to the hospitals, and numerous squads of soldiers were scattered here and there about the bloody field, busily and sorrowfully paying the sad tribute to the fallen heroes.

It was about 9 o'clock that the enemy's columns were found to be advancing to the left of the Williamsburg road, and very soon our lines in that quarter were vigorously attacked. The regiment of which the writer was a member occupied the captured redoubt in front of the Barker House, as a support to Stuart's Horse Artillery, which had taken position therein. Though he was not in the engagement, the author was an eyewitness to the awe-inspiring grandeur of an infantry combat that took place not more than about three hundred yards distant.

Several lines of Federal troops came boldly forward to the

front, one after the other, charging successively amid fire and smoke upon the solid line formed by the brigades of Pickett, Pryor, and Wilcox, which held that point. The rattle of the musketry was so incessant that it became one continuous roar, and the field for several moments at a time was thickly enveloped in smoke; when, however, the wind would lift the smoky canopy, friend and foe could be plainly discerned. It is needless to speak of the cool self-possession of Pickett's men as they fought on this occasion, since it was merely characteristic. At each opportunity, when the enemy winced at the destructive fire, they moved forward, until, slowly but surely, they gained headway. It was only after two hours' steady conflict that the Federal columns gave unmistakable evidence of yielding, and then they retreated, leaving our boys most willing victors.

Through that night we continued to occupy this position, which included the camps recently evacuated by General Casey, with much acceptable booty stored therein, loot that was quickly appropriated. On Monday morning, June 2, the army withdrew therefrom, and, taking up the line of march, returned to the camps around Richmond. Much to our sorrow, among those severely wounded late on Saturday evening was our brave commander, General Joseph E. Johnston. He was so much injured as to be incapacitated for active service for a considerable time. General Robert E. Lee was then appointed to the command by the President, Jefferson Davis, and ever thereafter the order to the Army of Northern Virginia was "Forward!"

The battle on Sunday morning was chiefly borne, on the Federal side, by General J. B. Richardson's division. Of the contest General Sumner says:

On Sunday morning, June 1, at 6:30 o'clock the enemy attacked us again in great fury, and this time the brunt of the battle was borne by Richardson's division. This division was placed on Saturday night parallel with the railroad, and the enemy advanced across the railroad to make the attack. This was a most obstinate contest, continuing for four hours, in which our troops showed the greatest gallantry and determination, and drove the enemy from the field.

General Richardson says:

Hardly had these arrangements been completed, at 6:30 a. m., when along the whole of our front line the enemy opened a heavy rolling fire of musketry within 50 yards. Near our left, two roads

crossed the railroad, and up these the enemy moved his columns of attack, supported on his left by battalions deployed in line of battle in the woods, the whole line coming up to us at once and without skirmishers in advance, showing that they had a good and perfect knowledge of the ground. Our men returned the fire with vivacity and spirit, and it soon became the heaviest musketry firing that I had ever experienced during an hour and a half, and the enemy interposed fresh regiments five different times, to allow their men to replenish their ammunition. The action had continued in this way about an hour. Soon after this the whole line of the enemy fell back for the first time, unable to stand our fire, and for a half an hour the firing ceased on both sides. As soon as these arrangements had been made the enemy, having apparently been re-enforced, now returned to the attack. The whole of my division on the field was very warmly engaged. The action lasted about one hour longer. Our line toward the last poured in its fire and repulsed the enemy with a general charge, assisted and followed up promptly by a bayonet charge on the left and rear of the enemy's line of two regiments of General French's brigade, the Fifty-seventh and Sixty-sixth New York, led by that general in person. In killed, wounded, and missing my division lost about 900 men and officers.

The following extracts are from the reports of Confederate generals.

General Johnston says:

On the morning of June 1 the enemy attacked the brigade of General Pickett, which was supported by that of General Pryor. The attack was vigorously repelled by these two brigades, the brunt of the action falling on General Pickett. This was the last demonstration made by the enemy.

General Longstreet says:

General Pickett's brigade was held in reserve. General Pryor's did not succeed in getting upon the field on Saturday in time to take part in the action of the 31st. Both, however, shared in repulsing a serious attack upon our position on Sunday, the 1st instant; Pickett's brigade bearing the brunt of the attack and repulsing it.

General D. H. Hill says:

At daylight next morning I learned that heavy reënforcements had come up to the support of Keyes. Longstreet's, Huger's, and my own divisions had opposed to us three Yankee corps,—Keyes',

Sumner's, and Heintzelman's. We also learned that General G. W. Smith had been checked upon the Nine-mile Road, and that no help could be expected in that direction. I therefore resolved to concentrate my troops around the captured works, in the hope that the Yankees would attempt to retake them. Orders were accordingly given to my advance brigades, commanded by Pickett, Pryor, and Wilcox, to draw in their extended lines and form near the late headquarters of General Casey.

Before these orders were received a furious attack was made upon Generals Armistead, Mahone, Pickett, Pryor, and Wilcox and their brigades on the left of the road. Armistead's men fled early in the action, with the exception of a few heroic companies, with which that gallant officer maintained his ground against the entire brigade. Mahone withdrew his brigade without any orders. I sent up Colston's to replace him, but he did not engage the Yankees, as I expected him to do. Pickett, Pryor, and Wilcox received their orders to fall back after the firing began, and wisely resolved not to do so until the assault was repulsed. As soon as this was done Wilcox and Pryor withdrew, but Pickett held his ground against the odds of ten to one for several hours longer, and only retired when the Yankees had ceased to annoy him. The Yankees were too prudent to attack us in position, and contented themselves for the balance of the day with a desultory fire of artillery, which hurt no one, and was only attended with the gratifying result of stampeding the amateur fighters and the camp plunderers from Richmond.

General Pickett says:

I rejoined my brigade at once, and by a change of front forward, put it in line of battle nearly perpendicular to the railroad and advanced. Armistead on my left, and Pryor and Wilcox (the latter I did not see, but heard he was there) on my right, struck the enemy within a short distance (who opened heavily on us), drove him on through an abatis, over a crossroad leading to the railroad, and was advancing over a second abatis when I had discovered Armistead's brigade had broken and were leaving the field pellmell. At this moment I was on foot and halfway across the abatis, the men moving on beautifully and carrying everything before them.

I could scarcely credit my own eyes in witnessing this misfortune on my left. I immediately rode to that part of [the] field; found nothing between me and [the] railroad except the gallant Armistead himself, with a regimental color and some 30 persons, mostly officers, with him. I saw our danger at once and dispatched a courier to General Hill, asking for more troops to cover the vacuum. Receiving no reply, and the enemy pressing forward in force, brigade after brigade, and threatening my left flank, I threw

back the left wing of the Nineteenth Virginia, the left regiment, so as to oppose a front to them, dispatched a staff officer to General Hill with [a] request for troops; and after a while sent a second dispatch, similarly worded.

As a matter of course, from having been the attacking party, I now had to act on the defensive. Fortunately the enemy seemed determined on attacking and carrying my front and driving me out of the abatis, which our men succeeded in preventing, though with considerable loss.

About this time I learned [that] Pryor's brigade was being withdrawn from my right. I had in the meantime sent all my staff and couriers back to General Hill, the last message being that if he would send more troops and some ammunition to me we would drive the enemy across the Chickahominy; and I have always believed this would have been done but for the misfortune which happened to our General on the previous evening.

At this perilous juncture, hearing nothing from General Hill, I rode as rapidly as possible to him, and explained as laconically [as I could] the position of affairs. He asked me if I could not withdraw my brigade. I said yes, but did not wish to do so; that I would leave all my wounded, lose many more men, and that the enemy would pour down on the disorganized mass, as he himself termed the troops about him. He then sent two regiments of Colston's brigade, which my assistant adjutant-general, Captain Pickett, put in position on my left, and asked me to take Mahone's brigade and put it on my right, which was done; Mahone becoming hotly engaged a few minutes after getting in position. I had [issued] an order to my men, as far as possible to reserve their fire. From that circumstance, I suppose and from the fact that the enemy had become aware of the small force actually opposed to them, a brigade debouched from a piece of woods in my front and moved steadily toward my left flank. They came up to within about range, when the commander, seeing his men about to commence firing, stopped them [and] called out, "What troops are these?" Some of our men shouted, "Virginians!" He then cried out, "Don't fire. They'll surrender; we'll capture all these d—d Virginians." Scarcely were the words uttered when the Nineteenth and the left of the Eighteenth rose up in the abatis and fired a withering volley into them, killing their commanding officer and literally mowing down their ranks. Just then Colston's regiments came up on the left and Mahone's on the right. The enemy retreated to their bushy cover, and their fire immediately slackened.

No other attempt was made by them to advance, and about 1 p. m., I judge, by General Hill's order, I withdrew the whole of our front line; Pryor and Wilcox, and some other troops I do not remember, being in position some 400 yards in our rear. We with-

drew in perfect order: not a gun was fired at us, and bringing off all our wounded. This was the conclusion of the battle of Seven Pines. No shot was fired afterward.

Our troops occupied the same ground that evening, June 1, and that night, which they had done on the one previous. General Mahone, with his brigade, occupied the redoubt, and our line of pickets was thrown well out in advance. I know this of my own personal knowledge, for General Hill sent for me about 1 o'clock at night, or, rather morning of June 2, and I went to the redoubt in search of him, and still farther on toward our picket line. General Hill gave me special orders to cover [the] withdrawal of the troops with my brigade, which, by the way, proved a much easier task than I had anticipated. I had formed my line of battle two regiments on each side of [the] road, some little distance in our rear of the redoubt. The whole of our force filed past by half an hour after sunrise. I then leisurely moved off. Not a Yankee in sight, or even a puff of smoke.

The casualties in these battles were heavy on both sides, the attacking party, as is usually the case, losing the larger number.

Union, 5031; Confederate, 6134.<sup>1</sup>

The forces actually engaged on Saturday on our right, at Casey's Camp and the railroad, consisted of 7 Confederate brigades against 12 brigades of the enemy. On the left 5 brigades of General G. W. Smith fought the whole of General Sumner's corps. During the two days' battles 3 of our divisions fought 6 divisions of the enemy.

As Kemper's brigade was filing to the right by fours, in front of the redoubt at the Barker House, preparatory to making a charge, a frightfully destructive fire was opened by the enemy hidden in the woods below Casey's Camp. Many of the brave fellows were instantaneously killed, while a far greater number were seriously wounded. The color bearer of the Seventeenth Virginia Regiment, while charging through the camp of the enemy, was stricken down. Though wounded in three places, he raised himself on his elbow, and with all the vim his waning strength permitted cheered his comrades on. The flag he had borne was taken by one of the color-guard, who fell wounded immediately after. A private then received the colors and retained them throughout the day.

During the heat of the battle, when the death-dealing minie-balls were ranging incessantly in all directions in their work of

<sup>1</sup> *War Records.*



destruction to life and limb, the voice of a wounded officer was heard calling for some one to remove him beyond their reach. Immediately four men—two officers and two privates of the Seventeenth—sprang forward in the face of the merciless storm of bullets, lifted him in their arms, and bore him out of danger. By such little acts of brotherly kindness and soldierly bravery the deep feelings of man's heart are stirred, and cheer after cheer arose in honor of that noble quartette as they unshrinkingly performed their "labor of love."

The position held by many of our troops after the battle in the swamps, where a number of poor wounded Federals had fallen, was soul-harrowing. The water in some places was deep, and doubtless many found watery graves. The whole place was enveloped in the blackness of darkness, and the dead and dying were huddled together; we were powerless either to remedy the situation or offer relief in any way, as we were under strict orders not to leave the lines, because an attack was anticipated at any moment.

The noble, gifted, much-loved Morrill was of those who fell in the fight of Saturday; he fell, proudly waving in the face of the enemy the battle-torn banner of the Seventeenth Virginia. It was he who on the memorable morning of the 24th of May, 1861, as he stood sentinel on the wharf at Alexandria, fired upon the boat of the *Pawnee*, as, with oars muffled, it was stealthily approaching the city.

On Sunday morning, as the bullets were cutting the air and the shells of the enemy were spluttering and bursting around, several of us devoted ourselves to performing the last sad rites for the dead of Company H who had fallen in the battle of the previous day. In the circle of the fort or redoubt a grave was dug, and in it, side by side, wrapped in their blankets, were laid the remains of the gallant Higdon and Lunt and Murray and Whittington (who had joined the company but a few hours before his death). To secure these comrades a soldier's burial in a soldier's grave, in the midst of heavy strife, was the best and only tribute we could pay them; and with ineffable sadness the duty was performed. Notwithstanding the interval since then, at the review of these pages irrepressible tears again start in evidence of a memory that words have neither the strength nor the pathos to express, nor the limner the art to portray.

## THE BURIAL

Full thirty years,—aye, more,—have sped  
Since that sad day at Seven Pines  
Where we stood 'round our sacred dead  
In the redoubt within our lines.

Do you recall: The clouds a tower,  
With golden sunbeams peeping through?—  
But 'tis no song for maiden's bow'r,  
Of moonbeams kissing evening's dew;

'Tis of a field, where foeman's ire  
Had not been quenched by streams of gore,—  
When Greek met Greek; the word was "Fire!"  
While vet'rans yelled at cannon's roar.

The rifles snapped their sharp report,  
With blinding smoke, with ceaseless din  
And sheets of flame; at each retort  
Each army aimed to die or win.

Apart therefrom, yet not afar,  
There met a group, sad rites to pay  
To comrades brave ere set life's star,—  
Who brought but honor to the gray.

In tribute to these honor'd dead  
The willing hands prepared the tomb,  
While they lay near on grassy bed,  
Deaf evermore to cannon's boom.

Their blankets wrapped them in their sleep;  
Earth gave a pillow for each head;  
Hearts swelled, but not an eye did weep;  
No moan disturb'd,—no word was said.

By tender hands these braves in gray  
Were laid where kinsman ne'er had slept,—  
With mothers, sisters, far away  
Across the lines our foeman kept.

So, old Earth clasp'd them to her breast  
As o'erhead shrieking shrapnel flew  
And screaming shells,—not friends, at best,—  
Made music for our last adieu:

Then, suddenly, upon the air  
The order came: "To arms! The foe!"  
The living thence, their part to bear,  
Rushed front, to deal the final blow.

## CHAPTER IX

HOW JACKSON KEPT THE ENEMY BUSY. JUNE, 1862

ON the Monday succeeding the battle described in the foregoing chapter the major portion of the army was withdrawn from the front, and returned to the camping grounds in the vicinity of Richmond. Gen. Robert E. Lee, upon taking command, deemed it among the first of his duties to see to the protection of Richmond. All approaches thereto were inspected by him personally, and preparation made for their proper defense. Much apprehension—and some despondency—was experienced about this time, not only by the officials of the Government but by a majority of the general officers of the army, that in case of attack the army would not be able to maintain its position.

Notwithstanding this and the attendant disadvantages brought to bear upon the new commander, the grand traits of his character became at once apparent. It was the opinion—and consequently the advice—of almost all the division generals of the army that a line nearer Richmond could be more effectively defended than the one then occupied (the same that was manned by the army under General Johnston). General Lee, entertaining a different view from theirs, continued to occupy, with a few changes, the same line, taking upon himself the entire responsibility.

From this time (June 2) he daily gave his personal attention to the strengthening of the position; he visited the different divisions, making himself familiar with every department of the army, while his presence among the officers and men soon produced the desired effect. All hearts were inspired with earnest zeal to obtain his approval, and every effort was made to carry out his wishes. As the work steadily progressed and the earthworks grew stronger the spirits of the men arose in proportion, and their confidence increased.

McClellan was still quartered in the mire, and, as we learn from his own reports to his superiors at Washington, was only

waiting more favorable weather before advancing upon Richmond. On the north side of the river, near Mechanicsville, he had about 25,000 troops, under command of the gallant Porter; the remainder, numbering fully 80,000, were on the south side, extending from the New Bridge to the White Oak Swamp. The continuous and heavy rains of the month had occasioned the Federal commander a great deal of trouble, for as soon as the repairs to the approaches to his bridges crossing the Chickahominy were completed, down would come a deluge of water and wash them away.

A body of Federal troops under General McDowell (of First Manassas fame), some 40,000 strong, had been stationed near Fredericksburg, and had been promised to General McClellan because of his repeated calls for reënforcements; but our intrepid Jackson had so wrought upon the feelings of General Halleck and President Lincoln by his inhospitality in the Valley in driving out and defeating their armies, that McDowell had to be recalled from Fredericksburg in order to protect the approaches to the Federal capital. Some idea of the alarm created by the echo of the name of "Stonewall" and the overestimated strength of Lee's army may be gleaned from the following extracts from McClellan's dispatches to Washington:

JUNE 20.—I have no doubt that Jackson has been reënforced from here. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that the enemy intends evacuating Richmond.

JUNE 24.—I would be glad to learn at your earliest convenience, the most exact information you have as to the position and movements of Jackson.

Reply to the above:

We have no definite information as to the numbers or position of Jackson's force. Some reports place 10,000 rebels under Jackson at Gordonsville; others that his force is at Port Republic, Harrisonburg and Luray. Neither McDowell, who is at Manassas, nor Banks and Fremont, who are at Middletown, appear to have any accurate knowledge of the subject.

From McClellan, June 25:

I incline to think that Jackson will attack my right and rear. The rebel force is stated at 200,000, including Jackson and Beauregard. I shall have to contend against vastly superior odds, if these reports be true.

The exposed position of Fitz John Porter's corps, near Beaver Dam, invited attack, being the extreme right of the enemy's lines and separated from the main body by the Chickahominy River. The Confederate army being in condition to become aggressive, Lee determined to attack. Preparatory to the execution of his plans, he directed General Stuart, commanding the cavalry, to make a circuit of the Federal army. The bold Knight of the Black Plume lost no time in girding on his sword and resuming his seat in the saddle; and at the head of about 1000 of his tried troopers he carried out his instructions with entire success, gaining much important information, capturing many prisoners, and destroying stores to a very large amount. The dismay occasioned by his presence in the rear of the Army of the Potomac caused a stampede, though it was of short duration, as the dashing cavalryman tarried only a very little while, then, recrossing the Chickahominy, entered our lines, having lost during the raid but one of his men. Of Stuart's many dashing exploits, this was beyond question the most brilliant. He has been fitly styled our Chevalier Bayard, in that he was "without fear and without reproach." As a cavalry leader he had no equal, for his very name inspired his men with enthusiasm—inspired them even long after his voice was hushed and his hand powerless.

After General Lee's plans were fully matured, he at once proceeded to put them into execution. By the 20th of June troops from the South, numbering 17,000, had reached Richmond. At this time General Jackson was ordered to withdraw quietly from the Valley and repair to Hanover Junction. To mask his real intention, General Lee sent five to six brigades of infantry to Staunton, with instructions to return and join General Jackson at the Junction on the 25th. The time decided upon to begin the advance upon the enemy at Mechanicsville was the morning of the 26th, but some unavoidable delays in the movement of Jackson's command prevented, thus somewhat embarrassing General Lee, by exposing to the enemy his purpose, and by affording McClellan sufficient time to prepare for the coming conflict.

The days preceding the commencement of the "Seven Days' Battles" around Richmond were charmingly quiet, there being no picket firing on the lines, and only a daily exchange between the blue and the gray of papers, coffee, and tobacco. A most terrific storm visited this section on the night of the 23d of June; hail

as large as pigeon eggs coming down in quantities, followed by a deluge of rain.

The Federal commander had long been preparing to move forward against Richmond, but it was generally believed that his well-known timidity was the cause of the delay. The following dispatches from him to the Secretary of War, at Washington, copied from the "War Records," are inserted to show that his intentions were good, and that it was not his fault that Richmond was not reached.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,  
June 25th (?), 1862.

HON. E. M. STANTON,  
SECRETARY OF WAR.

Everything very quiet to-day. I hope to open on enemy's batteries to-morrow morning, and to gain important advantages within forty-eight hours,—not, however, bringing us to Richmond, but somewhat nearer, and improving our position. It is again raining, but this will not probably defer movements.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,  
Major-General.

McCLELLAN'S, VA., June 26th, 1862, 12 m.

HON. E. M. STANTON,  
SECRETARY OF WAR, WASHINGTON, D. C.

The affair of yesterday was perfectly successful. We hold the picket line undisturbed. All things very quiet on the bank of the Chickahominy. I would prefer more noise.

GEO. B. McCLELLAN,  
Major-General, Commanding.

The date of the first dispatch was more probably the 24th, for on the morning of the 25th Hooker's division was pushed to the front, his troops, supported by the divisions of Kearny and Richardson, occupying both sides of the Williamsburg Road. Our pickets were slowly pressed back upon their supports—the brigades of Armistead and Wright—when a spirited little fight occurred, and the Federals were checked. Other Confederate troops, including a portion of Ransom's brigade, now appeared upon the field, when the conflict became warm. The enemy's supports coming forward and uniting in the attack caused the pressure against our lines to become somewhat serious; but after a gallant stand, the charging columns were repulsed and fell back to their original position. Another attempt was made in the

afternoon by Hooker's, Kearny's, and a part of Couch's divisions to carry our lines at this point, but the firmness of our troops, who had been reënforced by the brigade of Mahone, defeated that object, and they were again beaten back. Night closed the contest, the Federals being repulsed at all points. Thus ended the first of the "Seven Days Battles around Richmond."

Federal loss, about 500; Confederate loss, about 400.



## CHAPTER X

MECHANICSVILLE AND GAINES' MILL. JUNE 26 AND 27, 1862

ON the evening of the 25th of June orders to prepare for battle were issued, and the following morning every camp around Richmond was the scene of much activity. Guards were left in charge, while regiments, brigades and divisions in light fighting trim moved off in the direction of the rendezvous at the upper crossings of the Chickahominy. General A. P. Hill's division had the van, but owing to the delay already mentioned, Jackson's army did not reach its position until night—too late to assault the enemy's flank.

General Hill, fearing delay might prove fatal, at 4 o'clock p. m. began the assault upon the enemy's lines at Mechanicsville. The rattle of the "iron dice" and the roar of cannon soon proclaimed that the battle was opened. The small force posted at Mechanicsville soon gave way before General Hill's superior numbers, and retired to a previously fortified position, on a small stream known as Beaver Dam Creek, about a mile distant from the village. Their retrograde movement enabled our engineers to repair the bridge en route from Richmond to Mechanicsville, and before nightfall a portion of Longstreet's division crossed it and were in time to participate in that evening's battle.

The position at Beaver Dam was a strong one, as the left rested on the river, and the right, across and beyond the road in a piece of heavy timber; the river road crossing the creek at Ellison's Mills. The enemy, having cut down the timber in his front, had erected earthworks and used the utmost care to render their line a most formidable one to carry by assault.

The advance was rapidly continued by Hill's men, who were soon again in close quarters with the enemy along the entire lines; but the Federal forces, under command of General Reynolds, fought unyieldingly and rendered ineffectual our first attempt to capture their works. Later on, a second effort to force them from their position at the lower road met with a similar result.

The shades of evening settled into somber night and the men rested on their arms. The fight had been severe; our men, charging the bristling works under the galling fire of artillery and musketry, lost heavily. The accomplished soldier, General McClellan, seeing the necessity for a change of base, as his right flank was open to attack, during the night made the requisite preparations for his troops to retire from their stronghold. Before leaving, the match was applied to all the stores and surplus baggage that could not be conveniently removed, and the dense clouds of smoke that filled the air marked plainly the route of retreat.

At the earliest dawn of daylight, on the morning of the 27th, our guns opened on the retreating columns. A. P. Hill's division advanced under a continuous fire of artillery and musketry, frustrating every attempt on the part of the enemy to make a stand, and forcing the Federals back so rapidly as to compel them to desert their hospitals and medical stores. We passed numbers of the dead and wounded of both armies, as we hurried on in the footsteps of our fleeing antagonists. The surgeons were busily engaged with the necessary instruments, lint, and bandages. The entire route, from Beaver Dam to Gaines' Mill, presented a heart-sickening spectacle of desolation and destruction.

Of the position of the enemy on Beaver Dam Creek General Porter (Federal) thus speaks:

The position is naturally a strong one. To increase its defensibility earthworks were erected, under the supervision of General Reynolds, and masked from the view of the enemy.

Extracts from the report of the Confederate commander, Major-General A. P. Hill:

Beaver Dam Creek curves around Mechanicsville, the high banks being on the north side, and in possession of the enemy. This naturally strong line of defence had been made very much stronger by rifle-pits and earthen epaulements for guns.

The enemy opened a concentric fire of artillery on the head of Field's column, who, throwing his brigade into line of battle, with Pegram, in the center, steadily advancing, drove the enemy from Mechanicsville.

The battle now raged furiously along my whole line. The artillery fire from the enemy was terrific. Their position along Beaver Dam Creek was too strong to be carried by a direct attack without heavy loss, and expecting every moment to hear Jackson's guns on

my left and in rear of the enemy, I forbore to order the storming of their lines.

The battle ceased about 9 o'clock, my brigades resting along the creek, the object of this attack, viz.: clearing the way for Longstreet, having been fully accomplished. It was never contemplated that my division alone should have sustained the shock of this battle, but such was the case, and the only assistance received was from Ripley.

By midday our army had halted in front of the glittering bayonets and heavily massed artillery of the strategic McClellan, who, having selected a position of great natural advantages, fortified it with care, and now occupied it. It seemed as if he had foreseen the necessity of securing a stronghold that would enable his soldiers to repel the advances of the victorious Confederates. Time and superior fighting were required to dislodge them. Our men were in excellent condition, and so sanguine of success that they awaited the order to advance, in a spirit of determination to fight to the death, if necessary, for its achievement.

A part of Longstreet's division crossed the river in support of Hill on the night of the 26th. The sight witnessed by the remainder of the division, as well as by thousands of men, women, and children of the city of Richmond—who had gathered in the suburbs, eager to know and see all they could—is far beyond the gift of the most potent pen to portray. From their standpoint in the darkness, during the heavy cannonading then in progress, the heavens beyond, because of the incessant bursting of shells and vivid flashes from the musketry fire, seemed filled with liquid flame—a sight the sublimity of which no eye could view unawed.

Our brigade moved forward about dark, and halted on the causeway crossing the Chickahominy swamps. Here the night was passed, the officers and men sleeping on the gravel road. The battle on our front having ceased, we were sleeping soundly—many, no doubt, dreaming of what the morrow would bring—when suddenly a horse carelessly tied broke loose, and overturning several stacks of guns, raised no little commotion in our midst, as may be judged when the repeated cry of "Look out! Look out! Yankees!" fell with startling force upon the ear. Those who were only half awake evidently thought the enemy was really upon us, for, like frogs chased by bad boys, they plunged head foremost into the adjacent ditches. About fifty of us were as thoroughly drenched as though a waterspout had enveloped us, and when we emerged we were some degrees less

self-possessed as the cause presented itself. As many of us carried our blankets and oilcloths with us into the water, we found ourselves most reluctantly obliged to discard them, owing to their increased weight.

Our position (June 27) in front of McClellan's almost impregnable fortified lines at Gaines' Mill was as follows: Longstreet's division on the right, his lines extending to the Chickahominy; A. P. Hill's, the right center; D. H. Hill's, the left center; Jackson's, the left, and Stuart's cavalry protecting the left flank. Owing to General Jackson's guide having taken a road that brought the head of his column too far to the right, several hours were consumed in countermarching, to cover the desired point; hence it was one o'clock in the afternoon before his men were in proper position.

Posted in our front was the flower of McClellan's army, consisting of Porter's corps, reënforced until it numbered about 40,000 men. They occupied a plateau fitted by nature for defensive warfare—a plateau bounded on the northwest by a cliff eighty feet in height, with a stream at its base six or eight feet wide and several feet in depth. This cliff or bluff was surmounted by numerous pieces of artillery covering all the approaches, and three lines of infantry in front, one above the other. The heavy timber in front of that part of the line was not calculated to facilitate the movement of attacking troops.

The Federal lines formed an arc, the left curving to the northeast, with a deep ravine skirted by an open field of oats and sedge, several hundred yards wide, in its front. Stern resolution, dauntless courage, sustained by conviction of the righteousness of their cause, could alone prove the "Open Sesame" of the assaulting army.

About one o'clock Lee ordered the divisions of Longstreet and A. P. Hill to open the ball. Skirmishers were thrown out, the Federal pickets were driven in, the regiments supporting our skirmish lines pushed forward, and very soon the enemy's position was developed. The brigades then advanced, and as they came within range of the enemy's guns, many a noble man fell beneath the furious storm of shot and shells by which they were met. They halted at the deep ravine, whose steep, slippery banks it seemed impossible to cross, then fell back and reformed. These troops, however, though badly cut to pieces, were not discouraged, but each call found them "ready for the fray."

As soon as D. H. Hill was in position on the left of A. P.

Hill he engaged the enemy and the battle became general. The Confederate lines assaulted, fell back, and reformed for heavier blows. Projectiles of all kinds filled the air, with which the dense smoke blended; the glare from the muskets, sending forth their messengers of death, added yet more to the horror of the hour; but there was no sign of faltering, as the assailants made charge upon charge from right to left, from left to right, as hour after hour passed, seemingly with no further result than the thinning of the ranks upon both sides.

It was growing late, and the enemy, though hard pressed, still fought with the stubbornness of desperation. Far in his rear came the sound of a single gun, succeeded by another, and yet another, until the forest reverberated with the reports of artillery. Speedily the truth flashed upon us and was borne along the line: Stonewall Jackson was at hand and these guns were his. The command, "Forward! Charge!" rang out, and the whole line of warriors sprang to the front, while a prolonged yell, exceeding in volume of sound all other noise, broke forth simultaneously from each Confederate, and the work was done. The enemy's left gave way and Longstreet's men poured through their lines, pressing them back with continuous volleys of musketry; the right soon followed, and before the deepening twilight had donned its nightrobe, our brave antagonist was in full retreat. The victory was complete, and the Confederate capital was relieved of the menace of the foe.

It is upon record that Hood's Texans were the first to break through the enemy's lines during this hotly contested fight, but in this there is an evident mistake. In Lee's army there were no better fighting men than these same Texans; brave, fearless, ever ready to press on to victory, they were always to be relied upon; but in the affair referred to, the honor so richly merited should be awarded to Pickett's men.

As the evening was closing in, just before the end of the battle, Pickett's brigade, with R. H. Anderson's South Carolina brigade, supported by Kemper's brigade—all belonging to Longstreet's division—were placed on the right of our lines against the position occupied by the enemy in the strip of woods, back of the deep ravine and skirted by an open field. Let us note the fact that this attack was made upon the enemy's left, somewhat to our left, in the valley of the Chickahominy. Jackson's guns were speaking in stentorian tones upon the enemy's right and flank; the Hills were manfully at work in the center, and the

order came for Pickett's little brigade to storm the works directly across the open field of oats and sedge in its front. Several attempts had been made, each time with severe loss to our brave men, to capture this point, which was regarded at that time as the key to the situation. Personally directing their movements, the gallant Pickett placed his men in position and charged in line of battle, full brigade front, at double-quick, across the field, over the ravine, into the very ranks of the enemy on the side of the hill. The Federal skirmish line was hidden in the grass, and in this advance was literally run over. As the brigade reached the center of the field the fire of the opposing batteries and small arms was terrific, sweeping off scores of officers and men; but the lines closed at once, and on the Confederates rushed. Just before reaching the ravine, the advancing column was joined by Anderson's brigade, and all pushed forward into the chasm and up the slippery cliff, studded with timber, into the Federal lines. It was glorious!—and in token thereof came again that echoing yell from many thousand throats, for the day was ours.

In confirmation of the above recital, we copy from McClellan's "Reports," page 248, the following extract:

About 7 p. m. they threw fresh troops against General Porter with still greater fury, and finally gained the woods, held by our left. This reverse, aided by the confusion that followed an unsuccessful charge by five companies of the Fifth Cavalry, and followed, as it was, by more determined assaults on the remainder of our lines, now outflanked, caused a general retreat from our position to the hill in rear, overlooking the bridge.

Brigadier-General Whiting, commanding a division, of which the Texas brigade was a part, thus speaks of the charge:

The field, when we entered it, was about the head of the ravine which covered the enemy's left near the main road, a deep and steep chasm dividing the bluffs of the Chickahominy; on the left side of this as we fronted, General Hood put forward the First Texas and Hampton's Legion. Men were leaving the field in every direction and in great disorder; two regiments, one from South Carolina and one from Louisiana, were actually marching back from the fire. The First Texas was ordered to go over them or through them, which they did; the remaining Texas regiments were rapidly advanced, forming line on the right of the ravine, and the Third Brigade again on their right, and passing on, the whole line came under the enemy's fire. Here, from the nature of the ground and

position of the enemy, the Third changed front obliquely to the left, bringing its front parallel to the ravine. The enemy concealed in the woods and protected by the ravine, poured a destructive fire upon the advancing line for a quarter of a mile, and many brave officers and men fell. . . . Near the crest in front of us, and lying down, appeared the fragments of a brigade; men were skulking from the front in a shameful manner; the woods on our left and rear were full of troops in safe cover, from which they never stirred; but on the right of the Third a brigade [Pickett's] was moving gallantly up; still farther on the extreme right our troops appeared to be falling back.

The Texans had now come up and joined line on the left, led by General Hood, and the gallant Fourth, at the double-quick, when the word was given to charge, and the whole line, charged the ravine, with a yell, General Hood and Colonel Law leading their men.

General Lee says:

Pressing on toward the York River Railroad, A. P. Hill, who was in advance, reached the vicinity of New Cold Harbor about 2 p. m., when he encountered the enemy. He immediately formed his line nearly parallel to the road leading from that place toward McGehee's house, and soon became hotly engaged. The arrival of Jackson on our left was momentarily expected, and it was supposed that his approach would cause the extension of the enemy's line in that direction. Under this impression Longstreet was held back until this movement should commence. The principal part of the Federal Army was now on the north side of the Chickahominy. Hill's single division met this large force with the impetuous courage for which that officer and his troops are distinguished. They drove the enemy back, and assailed him in his strong position on the ridge. The battle raged fiercely, and with varying fortune, for more than two hours. Three regiments pierced the enemy's line and forced their way to the crest of the hill on the left, but were compelled to fall back before overwhelming numbers. The superior force of the enemy, assisted by the fire of his batteries south of the Chickahominy, which played incessantly on our columns as they pressed through the difficulties that obstructed their way, caused them to recoil. Though most of the men had never been under fire until the day before, they were rallied, and in turn repelled the advance of the enemy. Some brigades were broken, others stubbornly maintained their position, but it became apparent that the enemy was gradually gaining ground.

The attack on our left being delayed by the length of Jackson's march and the obstacles he encountered, Longstreet was ordered

to make a diversion in Hill's favor by a feint on the enemy's left. In making this demonstration the great strength of the position already described was discovered, and General Longstreet perceived that to render the diversion effectual, the feint must be converted into an attack. He resolved, with characteristic promptness, to carry the heights by assault. His column was quickly formed near the open ground, and as his preparations were completed Jackson arrived, and his right division, that of Whiting, took position on the left of Longstreet. At the same time D. H. Hill formed on our extreme left, and after a short but bloody conflict, forced his way through the morass and obstructions and drove the enemy from the woods on the opposite side. Ewell advanced on Hill's right, and engaged the enemy furiously. The First and Fourth Brigades of Jackson's own division filled the interval between Ewell and A. P. Hill. The Second and Third were sent to the right. The arrival of these fresh troops enabled A. P. Hill to withdraw some of his brigades, wearied and reduced by their long and arduous conflict. The line being now complete, a general advance from right to left was ordered. On the right the troops moved forward with steadiness, unchecked by the terrible fire from the triple line of the infantry on the hill, and the cannon on both sides of the river, which burst upon them as they emerged upon the plain. The dead and wounded marked the way of their intrepid advance; the brave Texans leading, closely followed by their no less daring comrades. The enemy were driven from the ravine to the first line of breastworks, over which our impetuous column dashed up to the intrenchments on the crest. These were quickly stormed, fourteen pieces of artillery captured, and the enemy driven into the field beyond. Fresh troops came to his support and he endeavored repeatedly to rally, but in vain. He was forced back, with great slaughter, until he reached the woods on the banks of the Chickahominy, and night put an end to the pursuit. Long lines of dead and wounded marked each stand made by the enemy in his stubborn resistance, and the field over which he retreated was strewn with the slain.

On the left the attack was no less vigorous and successful. D. H. Hill charged across the open ground in his front, one of his regiments having first bravely carried a battery whose fire enfiladed his advance. Gallantly supported by the troops on his right, who pressed forward with unfaltering resolution, he reached the crest of the ridge, and, after a sanguinary struggle, broke the enemy's line, captured several of his batteries, and drove him in confusion toward the Chickahominy, until darkness rendered farther pursuit impossible.

Our troops remained in undisturbed possession of the field, covered with the Federal dead and wounded, and their broken forces fled to the river or wandered through the woods.



It is a well-known fact with those who have made a careful study of the "Reports" of the Federal commanders issued in the early years of the War, that many of them greatly exaggerate the actual occurrences on the field of battle, and cause their defeats to appear as real victories. The writers of the history of those events, at this distant day, can well afford to leave off a good deal of the "fuss and feathers" to be found in many of them, and use instead the more sober and truthful accounts recorded in the reports of the officers of a lower rank.

As an illustration, extracts from some of the reports of the lower rank officers of the battle of Gaines' Mill are here placed in comparison with extracts from the reports of General McClellan, and General F. J. Porter.

General McClellan says:

The contest continued with varying fortunes until dark, when the enemy discontinued his attack. During the night the final withdrawal of the right wing across the Chickahominy was completed without difficulty and without confusion, a portion of the regulars remaining on the left bank until the morning of the 28th.

To the calm judgment of history and the future I leave the task of pronouncing upon this movement, confident that its verdict will be that no such difficult movement was ever more successfully executed; that no army ever fought more repeatedly, heroically, and successfully against such great odds; that no men of any race ever displayed greater discipline, endurance, patience, and cheerfulness under such hardships.

From General F. J. Porter's report is the following account:

As if for a final effort, just as darkness was covering everything from view, the enemy massed his fresh regiments on the right and left and threw them with overpowering force against our thinned and wearied battalions. In anticipation of this, our artillery, which till now had been well engaged at favorable points of the field in dealing destruction upon the enemy, or held in reserve, was now thrown to the front to cover the withdrawal of our retiring troops. The batteries already engaged continued playing on the coming horde, while others (in all about eighty guns) successively opened as our troops withdrew from the front of their fire, and checked in some places, in others drove back, the advancing masses.

All appeared to be doing well, our troops withdrawing in order to the cover of the guns, the enemy retiring, and victory, so far as possession of the field was concerned, had already settled upon our banners, when, to my great surprise, the artillery on the left were thrown into confusion by a charge of cavalry coming from the front.

With no infantry to support, these and the other batteries limbered up and moved to the rear,—some with deliberation and only after dealing destruction to the enemy; others in haste, but without confusion, leaving the battle-field with no enemy upon it. The explanation of this is, that although the cavalry had been directed early in the day to keep below the hill and under no circumstances to appear upon the crest, but to operate, if a favorable opportunity offered, against the flank of the enemy in the bottom land, Brig.-Gen. P. St. George Cooke, doubtless misunderstood, ordered it, as I have since learned, to charge between our infantry and artillery upon the enemy on our left flank, who had not yet emerged from the woods. This charge, executed in the face of a withering fire of artillery and in the midst of a heavy cannonading, resulted, of course, in their being thrown into confusion, and the bewildered horses, regardless of the efforts of the riders, wheeled about, and dashing through the batteries, convinced the gunners that they were charged by the enemy. To this alone is to be attributed our failure to hold the battle-field and to bring off all our guns and wounded.

At this juncture the cheering shouts of Brigadier-General French's and Meagher's men were heard advancing to our support. Although they came too late to give us the aid required to drive back the already retiring foe, they gave renewed courage and confidence to our men, whose regiments formed under their protection and were all withdrawn that night, with the material and supplies, to the other side of the Chickahominy. Thus was accomplished, with defeat and heavy loss to the enemy, the withdrawal of the right wing of the army on execution of the orders of the Major-General commanding.

Brigadier-General P. St. George Cooke, commanding Cavalry Reserve, says of the battle:

About six o'clock p. m. I observed all the infantry of the left wing, in rear of which was my position, giving way, and three batteries, which in reserve positions had been silent the whole day, open a violent fire upon the advancing lines of the enemy. Without orders, of course, I instantly conducted the Fifth and First Cavalry to the front, and deployed them in two lines a little in rear of, and just filling, the interval of the two right batteries. This was under a warm fire of musketry and shell. I instructed Captain Whiting, commanding the Fifth, to charge when the support or safety of the batteries required it. I instructed Colonel Blake to support the Fifth and charge when necessary.

I then galloped to the left, and placed the Lancers on the right of the third battery,—Second Artillery, Captain Robertson. I found it limbering, having been wholly unsupported. I ordered the fire reopened. The position was not very good for the matter in hand,

but the renewed fire was continued until the rest of the army had retreated, and the enemy was nearer the only line of retreat than we were.

He also says:

BATON ROUGE, LA., February 6, 1864.

I have found in the *Army and Navy Journal* of January 23 what purports to be part of Major-General McClellan's official report, and of which the following is an extract, relating to the battle of Gaines' Mill:

"This reverse, aided by the confusion that followed an unsuccessful charge by five companies of the Fifth Cavalry, and followed, as it was, by more determined assaults on the remainder of our lines, now outflanked, caused a general retreat from our position to the hill in the rear, overlooking the bridge. French's and Meagher's brigades now appeared, driving before them the stragglers who were thronging toward the bridge. These brigades advanced boldly to the front, and by their example, as well as the steadiness of their bearing, reanimated our own troops and warned the enemy that reinforcements had arrived. It was now dark. The enemy, already repulsed several times with terrible slaughter, and hearing the shouts of fresh troops, failed to follow up their advantage. This gave an opportunity to rally our men behind the brigades of Generals French and Meagher, and they again advanced up the hill, ready to repulse another attack."

The whole paragraph, compiled, of course, from the report of his favorite general, who has since been dismissed and forever incapacitated to hold an office of honor, is essentially false, but especially in its beginning, where a devoted and successful effort of a few squadrons of cavalry, in connection with a few others, to save some of the artillery and some of the honor of an army after it had suddenly retreated in disorder, is maliciously and absurdly belied into a cause of the defeat. Also, when General French's brigade approached the field of battle, the rebels had been checked and finally stopped at its edge by this remnant of the Cavalry Reserve and perhaps 100 Massachusetts infantry, and while they thus faced the enemy, were fired into from their rear by a battery belonging to or with said brigade.

If the War Department publishes General McClellan's report it would be but just to give publicity to this, and I request it.

Very respectfully,

P. ST. GEORGE COOKE,  
Brigadier-General, U. S. Army.

To the Adjutant-General of the Army,  
Washington City.

Extract from the report of Lieutenant-Colonel W N. Grier,  
First United States Cavalry :

Late in the afternoon our left wing was driven back by very heavy reënforcements of the enemy, and after they debouched from the timber in our front were charged by the Fifth Regiment of U. S. Cavalry, my two squadrons directed to be held as a reserve to watch the effect of that charge and act accordingly. The charge of the Fifth having made no visible impression on the overwhelming masses of the enemy, and none of them effecting a rally on the reserve, my squadrons retired in good order at a walk in rear of our artillery.

Colonel John F. Farnsworth says :

During the battle of Friday afternoon the balance of my command stood to horse until a portion of your forces gave way, when, seeing the confusion, I directed my men to mount, then deployed them so as to stop the rout as far as possible. I regret to say we succeeded only partially, crossing the Chickahominy that night about 11 o'clock and joining my wagons, neither men nor horses having had rest or food for nearly forty-eight hours.

Captain J. M. Robertson, Second Artillery, thus speaks of the affair :

Having completed my instructions, I reported with my battery to General Porter at his temporary headquarters near the Adams house and was held in reserve till about 1.30 o'clock p. m., when, by order of General Porter, I took up a position on the bottom ground to protect the left of the line resting on the Chickahominy swamp. No enemy appearing at this point, I remained in position till near sunset, at which time the left of the line was found to retire. As soon as the infantry had passed into the low ground in front of me I opened with shell, firing over their heads at the advancing enemy. As the first men and officers of the retiring regiment came opposite my battery I used every means in my power, without neglecting my more important duties with the battery, to induce them to halt and re-form behind a small hill in my rear, and was most ably and energetically assisted by First Lieut. J. M. Wilson, of my battery, in these endeavors, but without success.

Brigadier-General Geo. W Morrell in his report says :

At the fourth and last, about 6:30 o'clock, they came in irresistible force, and throwing themselves against the center and left, swept us from the ground by overwhelming numbers, and compelled us to retire. Lieutenant Buckley lost two of his guns, yet without

discredit, for he fought them to the last moment, having but three men, including non-commissioned officers, left to each piece when the infantry gave way. As we retired, the artillery opened fire from the left and rear, but the pressure was so great that the troops could not be rallied except in small bodies to support it.

Extracts from the reports of numerous other Federal officers could be given, but the ones cited are sufficient to satisfy the majority of readers that the battle of Gaines' Mill was not a Union victory.

Making the Fifth United States Cavalry the scapegoat for a defeat so glaring does not speak well for the officers that held the highest positions.

## CHAPTER XI

THE BATTLE OF FRAZIER'S FARM. JUNE 30, 1862

**D**URING the night of Friday, June 27, while the Army of the Potomac was rapidly crossing the Chickahominy, having left their dead and wounded comrades in our custody, the portion of the Army of Northern Virginia that was on the left bank of the river gladly availed itself of a much needed rest after its herculean efforts. While the terrible conflict of the afternoon was in progress our troops on the right bank, under General Magruder, made so spirited a demonstration in that vicinity against the Federal lines facing Richmond as to frustrate in a great measure the effort to strengthen by reënforcements the fighting divisions under General Porter.

The troops actually engaged in the battle of Gaines' Mill numbered about 40,000 on each side, but probably there was a preponderance with us, though it was slight. General McClellan displayed unquestionable military skill in the removal and protection of his army after the disastrous reverses at Gaines' Mill, and justly merited commendation for superior generalship; this, however, was not accorded him by his higher officials. But a little while elapsed after he had placed his army, with the greater part of his wagon trains, beyond our reach on the James River, ere he was relieved from command and relegated to a more subordinate position.

At the close of Friday evening's battle, in which, by the efficient aid of General Lee, General McClellan had been enabled to change his base, 1400 prisoners in one batch were sent to the rear in charge of two companies of the Seventeenth Virginia Infantry. They were the fruits secured by the gallant charge of Pickett's and Anderson's brigades. The prisoners were marched to the enclosure of the house that General Lee occupied as his headquarters, kept under guard during the night, and on the following morning at the earliest dawn of day, turned over to the cavalry, who escorted them, with a number of others, for a sojourn in "Old Libby."

At the early hour above named General Lee issued from the house, carrying in his hand a slice of bread and ham, and, mounting his horse that stood near in readiness for him, he called out to his aides: "Come, boys, it is time for us to be off!" and immediately galloped away, followed by his staff. It was arranged for the same morning that General Stuart, with his cavalry, supported by Ewell's division, should seize the York River Railroad, and by this means cut off General McClellan's supplies, thus forcing him to seek a new base. After some very sharp fighting this was accomplished, and McClellan judiciously made for the James River. He succeeded during the day in moving Keyes' corps to the White Oak Swamp bridge, and placing it in a strong position on the opposite side, in order to cover the withdrawal of trains and troops. Other portions of his army were moved in position to protect Savage's Station, where they had large quantities of stores. All possible preparation was made to contest these points until his trains were moving well on their way to the James.

General Magruder was under instructions to keep a strict watch upon the movements of the Federals on the right bank of the Chickahominy and to report them promptly to General Lee. For some reason—which the writer has never learned (if it was ever accounted for)—our commander was not notified of the withdrawal of General McClellan until the morning of the 29th, thus causing the loss of one entire day, during which the bulk of our army on the left bank of the stream remained in inactivity. As soon as General Lee received information of General McClellan's retreat he ordered an immediate pursuit, whereupon the divisions of the Hills, Longstreet, and others crossed the river, following quickly in the direction taken by the retiring foe.

The divisions of Jackson and Ewell retained position on the north side, in order to watch the enemy and to support the cavalry in case of necessity. That Sabbath day's march was made at a rapid gait and proved severely trying to the men. The atmosphere was so intensely sultry that numbers of the soldiers fell by the wayside from utter exhaustion.

In the afternoon of the 29th Magruder advanced his lines, and, finding the enemy in strong position at Savage's Station, he moved forward to the attack and was met with determined resistance. The corps of Sumner and Franklin were in possession of that point, and fought with unyielding courage. Until after nightfall the battle was continued, and yet the Federal

lines remained intact. When day dawned on the 30th they had departed, and were safely across the White Oak Swamp bridge.

General Magruder was relieved the next morning by General Jackson, who had orders to follow closely upon the enemy's rear, while the other divisions were to move on lines parallel with those of the enemy, for the purpose of striking them in the flank. In the meantime our artillery, supported by infantry, opened upon the Federals posted at White Oak Swamp bridge, and repeated attempts were made to dislodge them, each of which was ineffectual, for they resolutely held out till the night set in, then, taking advantage of the darkness, they again took their *cong  *.

Having passed from the left bank of the Chickahominy on the morning of the 29th, our portion of the advance arrived on the succeeding morning in the vicinity of the enemy, quartered at this time upon the property known as Frazier's Farm. The troops were arranged in position, and preparations made for the attack. Longstreet held the right and A. P. Hill the left—no other divisions having as yet come up.

The fight commenced in earnest about 3 o'clock p. m., and was stubbornly continued until the daylight was entirely swallowed up in the gloomy darkness of the night. The Federals were in a strong position, and owing to the nature of the ground, considerable time was consumed before the troops could be deployed in support of the attacking columns. It was General Lee's expectation that both Jackson and Huger would have given their support in this hotly contested battle; and such would have been the case, but for the fact that the former could not force the White Oak Swamp bridge, and the pathway of the latter was so obstructed by the fallen trees across it—purposely cut by the enemy—that a move on time was wholly impracticable. In consequence of these detentions, the whole burden of the evening's conflict rested entirely upon the divisions of Longstreet and Hill, and manfully did these veterans meet the emergency. With unabated ardor charge succeeded charge upon the bristling lines of our foe, until slowly they were driven back, contesting every foot of ground, until the day closed in and a cessation of hostilities ensued. With one exception every strong point had been wrested from their grasp. They quickly withdrew after the fight, and settled themselves in position at Malvern Hill.

We now quote from Brigadier-General Kemper's report:



Upon the 30th ultimo, the Division was halted in the vicinity of the enemy, on the road leading through Frazier's farm, and under the orders of Brig.-Gen. R. H. Anderson, commanding the Division, I formed my command in line of battle on the right and nearly perpendicular to the road; one regiment of the Second Brigade being posted in line between my left and the road. My command constituted the extreme right of our general line of battle, and was posted upon the rear edge of a dense body of timber; the Seventeenth Virginia Regiment (Colonel M. D. Corse) occupying the right; the Twenty-fourth Virginia Regiment (Lieut.-Col. Hairston, commanding), the center; the Eleventh Virginia (Capt. Otey, commanding), the right center, and the Seventh Virginia (Colonel W. T. Patton), the left center. Soon after getting into position, I received orders from Major-General Longstreet, to use the utmost care in guarding against any movement of the enemy upon my right, and I at once caused Colonel Corse, of the right regiment, to change front to rear on his left company, so that his regiment formed an obtuse angle with the line of the Brigade, and fronted obliquely to the right. I also caused two companies of this regiment to move forward from Corse's new front, as skirmishers, under command of Capt. Simpson. After advancing several hundred yards, these skirmishers were halted upon the rear edge of an open field, a good view of which was commanded from their position. I also posted Rogers' Battery of four pieces upon an open eminence, near the right of my line, and in supporting distance of Corse's regiment; the position being such as to command an extensive field upon my right. About five o'clock p. m., an order being received from Major-General Longstreet to advance my line, I immediately, in person, ordered Colonel Corse to change his front forward so as to bring the right of his regiment up to the brigade line, and sent my staff along the line toward the left, so as to insure the simultaneous advance of the entire line. The Brigade advanced in line of battle steadily and in good order, notwithstanding the unevenness of the ground, which, in places, was almost precipitous, the entangled undergrowth which filled the woods, and the firing of one of the enemy's batteries located directly in front which rapidly threw shell and round shot over and almost in the midst of my command. The advance continued to be conducted in good order, until very soon, coming upon the pickets of the enemy, and driving them in, the men seemed to be possessed with the idea that they were upon the enemy's main line, and, in an instant, the whole Brigade charged forward in double-quick time, and with loud cheers. Nothing could have been more chivalrously done, and nothing could have been more unfortunate, as the cheering of the men only served to direct the fire of the enemy's batteries; and the movement in double-quick time through dense woods, over rough ground, encumbered with matted undergrowth, and crossed

by a swamp, had the effect of producing more or less confusion, and breaking the continuity of the line, which, however, was preserved as well as it possibly could have been under the circumstances. But a single idea seemed to control the minds of the men, which was, to reach the enemy's line by the most direct route, and in the shortest time; and no earthly power could have availed to arrest or restrain the impetuosity with which they rushed toward the foe; for my orders previously given, with great care and emphasis, to the assembled field officers of the Brigade, forbade any movement in double-quick time over such ground when the enemy was not in view.

The obstructions were such as to make it impossible for any officer to see more than a few files of his men at one view, and it was apparent that any effort to halt and reform the entire Brigade would be futile, and would only serve to produce increased confusion. But whatever the error of the men in advancing too rapidly, in disregard of previous orders to the contrary, it was an error upon the side of bravery. After advancing in this way probably ten or twelve hundred yards, crossing two bodies of woods, and a small intermediate field, the line suddenly emerged into another field, facing a battery of the enemy, consisting of not less than eight pieces, distant but a few hundred yards, while the enemy's infantry were found protected by an imperfectly and hastily-constructed breastwork, and a house nearby. At the same time, it became apparent that another battery of the enemy was posted a considerable distance to our left. These two batteries and the enemy's infantry poured an incessant fire of shell, grape, canister, and lead upon my lines, and did much execution. Still there was no perceptible faltering in the advance of these brave men, who rushed across the open field, pouring a well directed fire into the enemy, driving him from his breastworks and the battery in our front. The guns of the battery were abandoned to us for the time being, and my command was in virtual possession of the chosen position of the enemy. A more impetuous and desperate charge was never made than that of my small command against the sheltered and greatly superior forces of the enemy. The ground which they gained from the enemy is marked by the graves of some of my veterans, who were buried where they fell; and those graves marked with the names of the occupants, situated at and near the position of the enemy, show the points at which they dashed against the strongholds of the retreating foe. It is proper to be stated here that the left of my line was entirely unsupported, and greatly to my surprise and disappointment; for I had supposed that the movement of my Brigade was a part of a general advance of our entire line. Up to this time no firing was heard upon my left, except the firing of the enemy, which was directed upon my line with telling effect.

Afterwards, at a late hour, I found the right regiment of the Second Brigade (on the right of which I had originally formed) standing fast at or near the line from which my advance was begun. I was informed that this regiment had remained from the first in that position, having received no subsequent orders to move forward. I trust I shall not be understood as alleging or intimating any delinquency upon the part of the Second Brigade, and I certainly do not undertake to say at what time that brigade, commanded by Colonel Jenkins, advanced; but, if its advance was simultaneous with my own, it must have happened that the lines of advance of the two brigades were so divergent as to leave a wide interval between the right of the one and the left of the other. Whatever were the operations of the Second Brigade, they were doubtless in keeping with its proud character in the past and that of its gallant commander. All that I undertake to state positively in this connection is, that the right regiment of the Second Brigade did not advance for a long time after my Brigade had been moved forward, and that at the time when my command had obtained virtual possession of the enemy's position, no Confederate troops were anywhere visible except my own. It now became evident that the position sought to be held by my command was wholly untenable by them, unless largely and immediately reënforced. The inferior numbers which had alarmed the enemy, and driven him from his breastworks and batteries, soon became apparent to him, and he at once proceeded to make use of his advantage. While greatly superior numbers hung upon our front, considerable bodies of the enemy were thrown upon both flanks of my command, which was now in imminent danger of being wholly captured or destroyed. Already they were capturing officers and men at different points of my line, principally upon my right. No reënforcements appeared, and the dire alternative of withdrawing from the position, although of obvious and inevitable necessity, was reluctantly submitted to.

Owing to the difficulties offered by the wilderness through which the Brigade had advanced, the task of reassembling and re-forming the regiments was attended with much trouble. I sent out details as speedily as possible to direct officers and men where to re-form; and as soon as this task was accomplished, imperfectly, it is true, but as effectually as was possible at so late an hour of the day, I repaired to General Longstreet's headquarters as soon as I could find them, and, under instruction then received, it now being night, I proceeded to select a suitable position on the road in the rear, at which stragglers could be arrested, and such of my men as had not then come in could be re-collected.

I should have mentioned before, that soon after my command was overpowered, and before all of it had fallen back, General Branch's Brigade was found coming up, and General Branch was

shown by me into the position which my gallant men had vainly sought to hold against overwhelming odds, and immediately afterwards the Third Brigade of this Division, Colonel Hunton commanding, took position on Branch's right. If it had been possible for these brigades to have advanced simultaneously with my own, the victory of the day would have been achieved on the right of our line with comparatively little difficulty, and at an early hour. When my line emerged into the open field in front of the enemy's batteries, the Seventh Virginia, commanded by Colonel W. T. Patton, gallantly assisted by Lieutenant-Colonel Flowree and Major Swindler, was in good order, considering the difficulties of the ground over which it had passed, and this regiment and the First Virginia, nobly sustained by such portions of the other regiments as had come up, made the first daring charge which drove the enemy from his position. Several companies of the Seventeenth Virginia were unavoidably delayed for some time by the almost impassable nature of the swamp at the point at which they crossed.

Gen. Longstreet reports :

Troops were thrown forward as rapidly as possible to the support of the attacking columns. Owing to the nature of the ground, that concert of action, so essential to complete success, could not be obtained, particularly attacking such odds against us and in position. The enemy, however, was driven back slowly and steadily, contesting the ground inch by inch. He succeeded in getting some of his batteries off the field, and by holding his last position till dark, in withdrawing his forces under the cover of night. The troops sustained their reputation for coolness, courage, determination and devotion so well earned on many hotly contested fields. Branch's Brigade, of Major-General A. P. Hill's Division, did not render the prompt support to our right which was expected, and it is believed that several of our officers and men were taken prisoners in consequence. The other brigades of this Division were prompt, and advanced to the attack with an alacrity worthy of their gallant leaders. They recovered and secured the captured batteries, from some of which the troops of my Division had been compelled to retire for want of prompt support. The odds against us on this field were probably greater than on any other.

General Lee says :

Huger reported that his progress was obstructed ; but about four p. m. firing was heard in the direction of the Charles City Road, which was supposed to indicate his approach. Longstreet immediately opened with one of his batteries, to give notice of his presence. This brought on the engagement, but Huger not coming up, and

Jackson having been unable to force the passage of White Oak Swamp, Longstreet and Hill were without the expected support. The superiority of numbers and advantage of position were on the side of the enemy. The battle raged furiously until nine p. m. By that time the enemy had been driven with great slaughter from every position but one, which he maintained until he was enabled to withdraw under cover of darkness. At the close of the struggle nearly the entire field remained in our possession, covered with the enemy's dead and wounded. Many prisoners, including a General of division, were captured, and several batteries, with some thousands of small arms, were taken. Could the other commands have co-operated in the action, the result would have proved most disastrous to the enemy.

The following extract is from the report of the Federal General Sumner :

About three o'clock p. m. the action commenced by a determined assault of the enemy on McCall's division, which was some distance on my right and front. Many of McCall's division came flying into my lines, closely followed by the enemy.

The battle of Glendale was the most severe action since the battle of Fair Oaks, and it gives me great pleasure to state that the troops engaged in it, with the exception of McCall's division, behaved most nobly.

At nine o'clock p. m. I received intelligence that General Franklin had retreated and that General Heintzelman was going to do it. This, of course, compelled me to retire at once, which I certainly should not have done without orders from the commanding general if these generals had not fallen back and entirely uncovered my right flank.

Extracts from General Sedgwick's report :

About 3 p. m. a very fierce and strong attack was made upon McCall's division in the first line, which, after a short resistance, retired, thus bringing in direct contact with the enemy that portion of my command with me. Burns went immediately to meet the enemy and Dana's and Sully's brigades were recalled, again marching a part of the way at double-quick. The Nineteenth Massachusetts, Colonel Hinks, was the first to arrive, and scarcely pausing to draw breath, gallantly dashed at the enemy. The others followed and went to the front as they came up as rapidly as their wearied condition rendered possible. Some temporary confusion arose among the regiments of Dana's brigade, owing to their failure to advance equally with each other ; and all these regiments suffered severely. The entire division was now hotly engaged, the greater

part of it until night; and not only did these troops meet and repulse the assaults of the enemy, but were forced to withstand the demoralizing influence of the panic among those of the first line, who in many instances broke through our ranks in their haste to move out of reach of the enemy's fire.

General McCall says in his report:

For nearly two hours the battle raged hotly here, and under a perfect storm of shot and shell the gallant and much-to-be-lamented Col. Seneca G. Simmons fell also mortally wounded. At last the enemy was compelled to retire before the well-directed musketry fire of the reserves. The German batteries were driven to the rear, but I rode up and sent them back. It was, however, of little avail, and they were soon after abandoned by the cannoneers.

It must not be supposed that the enemy were inactive along the center and on the right of my line during all this time. The batteries in front of the enemy were boldly charged upon, but the enemy was speedily forced back when I reënforced this part of the line with the two regiments of the reserve still remaining on the ground. The contest was severe, and put the steadiness of these regiments to the test. They both suffered much, but particularly the First Regiment, whose Lieutenant-Colonel, H. M. McIntire, lost his left leg below the knee.

In the course of this struggle I had the pleasure of having presented to me a regimental color borne off from the attacking regiment. Soon after this a most determined charge was made on Randol's battery by a full brigade advancing in a wedge-shape, without order, but in perfect recklessness. Somewhat similar charges had, as I have stated, been previously made on Cooper's and Kern's batteries by single regiments, without success; they having recoiled before the storm of canister hurled against them. A like result was anticipated by Randol's battery, and the Fourth Regiment was requested not to fire until the battery had done with them. Its gallant commander did not doubt his ability to repel the attack, and his guns did indeed mow down the advancing host; but still the gaps were closed, and the enemy came in upon a run to the very muzzles of his guns. It was a perfect torrent of men, and they were in the battery before the guns could be removed. Two guns that were indeed successfully limbered had their horses killed and wounded, and were overturned on the spot; and the enemy, dashing past, drove the greater part of the Fourth Regiment before them. The left company (B), nevertheless, stood its ground with its captain, Fred A. Conrad, in front of it, as did likewise certain men of other companies.

I had ridden into the regiment and endeavored to check them,

but with only partial success. It was here my fortune to witness one of the fiercest bayonet fights that perhaps ever occurred on this continent. Bayonet wounds, mortal or slight, were given and received. I saw skulls crushed by the butts of muskets, and every effort made by either party in this life-or-death struggle, proving, indeed, that here Greek had met Greek.

The Seventh Regiment was at this time on the right of the Fourth, and was too closely engaged with a force, also of great superiority in numbers, to lend any assistance to the gallant few of the Fourth who were struggling at their side. In fine, these few men, some 70 or 80, were borne bodily off among the rebels; and when they reached a gap in the fence walked through it, while the enemy, intent on pursuing those in front of them, passed on without noticing them. My right was, as I say, literally forced off the ground by the weight simply of the enemy's column.

From General Truman Seymour's report:

On the extreme left, a small log farm-house [Whitlock's] had hastily been prepared for defence by piling rails and logs so as to shelter a part of the Twelfth Regiment, and from which, supported as it was by other troops, it should never have been driven. A fire from skirmishers, added to that of the distant artillery, drove these men, however, early in the action, and with very weak resistance, from their posts, and lost to us a very important point.

The force thrown upon us was too great to be long withstood.

On the left, no sooner were the Parrott guns subjected to the fire of musketry than they were limbered up and withdrawn, causing much confusion. The cavalry, crowded into a narrow ravine and shaken by the disorder, soon followed.

## CHAPTER XII

THE BATTLE OF MALVERN HILL. JULY 1, 1862

THE battle of Malvern Hill may most truthfully be called the crowning effort of the many made by both armies during the "Seven Days" battles. It was fought on Tuesday, the first day of July, and to it the minds of surviving participants revert as a day memorable for bloodshed.

General Lee in his report speaks thus of the enemy's position :

On this position, of great natural strength, he had concentrated his powerful artillery, supported by masses of infantry, partially protected by earthworks. His left rested near Crew's house, and his right near Binford's. Immediately in his front the ground was open, varying in width from the crest, and was completely swept by the fire of his infantry and artillery. To reach this open ground our troops had to advance through a broken and thickly wooded country, traversed, nearly throughout its whole extent, by a swamp passable but at few places, and difficult at those. The whole was within range of the batteries on the heights and the gunboats in the river, under whose incessant fire our movements had to be executed.

When daylight came the two armies were resting in close proximity to each other, McClellan's men occupying the heights, while Lee's army was lying below, partially surrounding that mountain with its surface of iron and steel. Our divisions were all present: Longstreet and A. P. Hill, with decimated ranks, were held in reserve, while Jackson's, Whiting's, D. H. Hill's, Magruder's, and a portion of Ewell's and Huger's commands were given position on the front.

The greater part of the day was consumed in carefully reconnoitering the situation of the enemy; skirmishers were advanced, and our artillery lent a hand, by feeling along the different points on our front. Having fully satisfied himself, by means of the observations these movements enabled him to make, our commander decided to attack our opponent's left on that part of his lines next to the river and under cover of his gunboats.



It was after six o'clock when our artillery opened the ball with heavy cannonading, to which the enemy responded with his field-pieces and from his gunboats, producing a racket indescribable. Amid this din Magruder's men gallantly advanced to the charge, while demonstrations were being made simultaneously by Jackson and D. H. Hill on the center and left. The battle raged fiercely in front of Magruder, and after several resolute charges, the enemy's left was forced back and our men gained the crest of the hill, which they held, however, only for a short time, because of the need of support at the critical moment, which failing them, compelled them to fall back and withdraw from the contest. It was a terrific fight while it lasted; for, as the men encountered each other upon the hill-top, they grappled hand-to-hand, neither side gaining any real advantage. The artillery fire steadily continued for several hours after dark; and our men slept on the field in readiness to renew the battle at the peep of day.

Of the battle of Malvern Hill General McClellan thus speaks:

The attack was made upon our left and left center, and the brunt of it was borne by Porter's corps (including Hunt's reserve artillery and Tyler's heavy guns) and Couch's division, reënforced by the brigades of Sickles and Meagher. It was desperate, brave, and determined; but so destructive was the fire of our numerous artillery, so heroic the conduct of our infantry, and so admirable the dispositions of Porter, that no troops could have carried the position. Late in the evening the enemy fell back, thoroughly beaten, with dreadful slaughter. So completely was he crushed, and so great were his losses, that he has not since ventured to attack us.

General F. J. Porter says:

This contest was maintained by Morrell's and Couch's divisions, the former supported by Sykes, who had thrown some of his regiments to the front and dispersed a large column attempting to take us in flank. A portion of the reserve artillery was also here in action. While the battle was proceeding, seeing that the enemy was pressing our men and accumulating his masses to pour fresh troops upon them, I called for aid from General Sumner, which call was promptly responded to by the arrival of General Meagher, with his brigade, followed by that of Sickles, which General Heintzelman voluntarily and generously sent to complete the contest. . .

For this brilliant action of my corps, inflicting on the enemy a blow which under other circumstances might have been followed up to a decisive victory, we can only claim that the success obtained

secured for the army the following days of peaceful and undisturbed retirement to Harrison's Landing, so essential to rest, recruit and security.

General Morrell says :

Simultaneously with the attack on the left of my rear a most determined and powerful one was made on my left front. The enemy in great force emerged from the woods, and, notwithstanding the severe fire from the batteries, advanced steadily until they arrived near them, when the supporting regiments . gallantly moved forward and repulsed them; but being reënforced by fresh troops, who extended their line on the right and left, these regiments were compelled to fall back to their former position, where they maintained their ground until their ammunition was exhausted, and they were regularly relieved by the —————, and these, supported by the —————, continued the fight against unequal numbers, until they were in turn relieved by Sykes' division and the Irish Brigade, General Meagher, which, having been sent to our aid, was led into action by its own commander and General Porter.

It was now after 7 o'clock. The enemy, constantly reënforced, fought with great obstinancy, but made no impression on our line; yet they continued the struggle till after dark, and only relinquished it when their strength was exhausted.

From Gen. Robert E. Lee's report :

Owing to ignorance of the country, the dense forests impeding necessary communication, and the extreme difficulty of the ground, the whole line was not formed until a late hour in the afternoon. The obstacles presented by the woods and swamp made it impracticable to bring up a sufficient amount of artillery to oppose successfully the extraordinary force of that arm employed by the enemy, while the field itself afforded us few positions favorable for its use, and none for its proper concentration. Orders were issued for a general advance at a given signal; but the causes referred to prevented a proper concert of action among the troops. D. H. Hill pressed forward across the open field and engaged the enemy gallantly, breaking and driving back the first line; but a simultaneous advance of the other troops not taking place, he found himself unable to maintain the ground he had gained against the overwhelming numbers and batteries of the enemy. Jackson sent to his support his own division and that part of Ewell's which was in reserve, but owing to the increasing darkness and intricacy of the forest and swamp, they did not arrive in time to render the desired assistance. Hill was therefore compelled to abandon part of the ground he had gained after suffering severe loss and inflicting heavy damage upon

the enemy. On the right the attack was gallantly made by Huger's and Magruder's commands. Two brigades of the former commenced the action; the other two were subsequently sent to the support of Magruder and Hill. Several determined efforts were made to storm the hill at Crew's house. The brigades advanced bravely across the open field, raked by the fire of a hundred cannon and the musketry of large bodies of infantry. Some were broken and gave way, others approached close to the guns, driving back the infantry, compelling the advanced batteries to retire, to escape capture, and mingling their dead with those of the enemy. For want of concert among the attacking columns, their assaults were too weak to break the Federal line and after struggling gallantly, sustaining and inflicting great loss, they were compelled successively to retire. Night was approaching when the attack began, and it soon became difficult to distinguish friend from foe. The firing continued until after 9 p. m., but no decided result was gained. Part of the troops were withdrawn to their original positions, others remained on the open field, and some rested within a hundred yards of the batteries that had been so bravely but vainly assailed.

On July 2 it was discovered that the enemy had withdrawn during the night, leaving the ground covered with his dead and wounded, and his route exhibiting abundant evidence of precipitate retreat.

Gen. D. H. Hill says:

The battle of Malvern Hill might have been a complete and glorious success had not our artillery and infantry been fought in detail. My division batteries, having been three times engaged, had exhausted all their ammunition and had been sent back for a fresh supply. If I had had them with me, with a good supply of ammunition, I feel confident that we could have beaten the force immediately in front of us. Again, the want of concert with the infantry divisions was most painful. My division fought an hour or more the whole Yankee force without assistance from a single Confederate soldier. The front line of the Yankees was twice broken and in full retreat, when fresh troops came to its support. At such critical junctures the general advance of the divisions on my right and left must have been decisive. Some half an hour after my division had ceased to struggle against odds of more than 10 to 1 and had fallen back McLaws' division advanced, but to share a similar fate.

So far as I can learn none of our troops drew trigger, except McLaws' division, mine, and a portion of Huger's. Notwithstanding the tremendous odds against us and the blundering management of the battle, we inflicted heavy loss upon the Yankees.

They retreated in the night, leaving their dead unburied, their

wounded on the ground, three pieces of artillery abandoned, and thousands of superior rifles thrown away. None of their previous retreats exhibited such unmistakable signs of rout and demoralization. The wheat-fields about Shirly were all trampled down by the frightened herd, too impatient to follow the road. Arms, accouterments, knapsacks, overcoats, and clothing of every description were wildly strewn on the road-side, in the woods, and in the field.

The casualties in these many terrific encounters from in front of Richmond to Malvern Hill, June 25-July 2, were necessarily heavy, especially to the Confederate Army, which was the aggressor. They were:

Union losses, 15,849; Confederate losses, 20,071.

These figures are taken from the pages of the "War Records"; but to the mind of the writer, and to many others who were engaged in those bloody contests, the numbers given on the Federal side fall far short of the actual losses sustained.

The following copy of the letter from the President, A. Lincoln, to General McClellan will sustain this view:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
WASHINGTON, July 13, 1862.

MAJOR-GENERAL MCCLELLAN.

MY DEAR SIR: I am told that over 160,000 men have gone into your army on the Peninsula. When I was with you the other day we made out 86,500 remaining, leaving 73,500 to be accounted for. I believe 23,500 will cover all the killed, wounded, and missing in all your battles and skirmishes, leaving 50,000 who have left otherwise. Not more than 5,000 of these have died, leaving 45,000 of your army still alive and not with it. I believe half or two-thirds of them are fit for duty to-day. Have you any more perfect knowledge of this than I have? If I am right, and you had those men with you, you could go into Richmond in the next three days. How can they be got to you, and how can they be prevented from getting away in such numbers for the future?

A. LINCOLN.

Comment is needless.

Malvern Hill marked the close of the toilsome, wearying seven days of marching and fighting. In order to appreciate, at this remote period, the intense strain upon both officers and men during those heroic times, we must remember to locate them in a midsummer, whose heated term developed in a high degree the power of July's burning sun. The wayside received many a

noble soldier, who fell from exhaustion during those hurried marches. The most harrowing sufferings were those endured by the wounded, who lay exposed to the fiery heat that beat on those scorched fields, with no friendly hand free to bind up their gaping wounds, no water within reach with which to quench the intolerable thirst that well-nigh consumed them. Is it not wonderful that any of them survived to tell the tale? As men and animals had experienced these tortures in both armies, a breathing spell had now become a necessity.

With skilful secrecy McClellan had moved away during that night in a heavy rain, and selecting a strong point at Harrison's Landing, on the James River, he at once availed himself of the position. We stayed where we were at Malvern Hill, without change of base. A portion of Jackson's forces was marched forward on the 2nd of July, and after arriving in front of the enemy on the 3rd, at Harrison's Landing, they proceeded without delay to drive in his skirmishers, and to take possession of a favorable point, where they remained until recalled on the 8th.

The site upon which the Federals were posted, protected as it was by their fleet of gunboats, was too strong to be carried by assault. Being cognizant of this, our commander decided,—and very wisely, too,—not to order an attack upon it. A competent guard being detailed to watch the brave, though now discomfited, McClellan, our army after a few days returned with pleasure to the vicinity of Richmond, where they went into camp; the principal objects to be effected being the getting of much needed rest, additional recruits, and reorganization.

Our great victory over the invading army had given new life and had sent thrills of joy throughout the length and breadth of the Confederacy. By the first day of August our army numbered about 70,000 effective men, well supplied with arms, equipments, and material necessary to render it in better condition than ever before,—thanks to the enemy's captured stores. This reorganized army was formed into two corps by General Lee, who assigned the command of one to Longstreet, and the other to Jackson; thus conferring a well-merited compliment, by making them lieutenants to our great leader.

The important and wonderful results achieved by the campaign above chronicled emit an unwavering light upon the skill and generalship of Lee, our greatly-beloved and venerated Chieftain. Within one month he had drawn 30,000 additional men to his standard, had erected a line of works around the City of Rich-

mond,—works that assured a successful defence against the approach of largely superior numbers,—and had succeeded in winning the confidence and affection of his officers and men. In addition to this, he held control of all the territory in possession of the army when he was called to its command; with inferior arms and equipments he had assumed the offensive, attacked the enemy within the well-fortified Federal lines, driving the foe slowly but surely from every stronghold, capturing immense quantities of army stores, and compelling the best general in the Federal service to change his base, put himself on the defensive, and, at the risk of losing his army, fall back from in front of the Confederate capital,—the city that the invader had travelled so far, and at such enormous expense, to capture,—and seek the protection of his country's navy, after the loss of a very large number of his guns. The effect upon the people was electrical in restoring throughout the South an abiding confidence, and infusing greater energy into the masses for future utility.

Since the memorable happenings of the "Seven Days' Battles" numerous discussions have taken place in estimating the numbers engaged in those fights, and many of the general officers differ very widely in their estimates. On the 26th of June, 1862, the Army of the Potomac had an aggregate force of 105,000 men present fit for duty.<sup>1</sup>

From the official returns (on the same date) of the principal part of our army, and from a fair estimate of several small commands, we find, of those present fit for duty, thirty-nine brigades of infantry, each with its complement of artillery, divided as follows: Longstreet, 9051; D. H. Hill, 10,000; Magruder, 13,000; Holmes, 6573; Huger, 8930; A. P. Hill, 13,000; Whiting, 4000; Lawton, 8500; Jackson and Ewell (the Army of the Valley), 8000; Stuart, about 2500 cavalry, and Pendleton, four battalions of artillery in reserve, rated (in high figures) at 1500 men. Summing these up into one whole, we find the total to be a little in excess of 80,000 men,—the aggregate strength of the Army of Northern Virginia.

It can be truthfully asserted that at no period during the great war was there present, fit for duty, any larger force under General Lee's command. When we take into consideration the fact that though General Lee was the aggressor, he had from the outset not only a far superior force, in point of numbers, to cope

<sup>1</sup> McClellan's *Reports and Campaigns*.

with, but a systematically intrenched line of breastworks, guarded by felled trees in front, from which the enemy was to be driven, then it can be readily understood that no ordinary grade of fighting could have effected results so magnificent as those obtained by him.

We would note another important point that presents itself and merits attention; which is: In the battle of Gaines' Mill, the third day's fight, where the hardest knocks were reciprocated and the greatest number of our infantry charges were made,—in the majority of cases without the support of our artillery,—our antagonists were the flower of the Army of the Potomac, General Porter's division of United States Regulars, who maintained their ground nobly and fought with desperation. A victory over veteran soldiers such as they, though dearly won, was a victory indeed,—a victory worthy of a prominent place in the annals of Southern chivalry.

The following is General Lee's congratulatory Order :

HEADQUARTERS IN THE FIELD,  
July 7, 1862.

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 75.

The general commanding, profoundly grateful to the only Giver of all victory for the signal success with which He has blessed our arms, tenders his warmest thanks and congratulations to the army, by whose valor such splendid results have been achieved.

On Thursday, June 26, the powerful and thoroughly-equipped army of the enemy was entrenched in works, vast in extent and most formidable in character, within sight of our capital. To-day the remains of that confident and threatening host lie upon the banks of the James River, 30 miles from Richmond, seeking to recover, under protection of his gunboats, from the effects of a series of disastrous defeats.

The battle, beginning on the afternoon of June 26 above Mechanicsville, continued until the night of July 1, with only such intervals as were necessary to pursue and overtake the fleeing foe. His strong entrenchments and obstinate resistance were overcome, and our army swept resistlessly down the north side of the Chickahominy until it reached the rear of the enemy and broke his communications with the York, capturing or causing the destruction of many valuable stores, and, by the decisive battle of Friday, forcing the enemy from his line of powerful fortifications on the south side of the Chickahominy and driving him to a precipitate retreat. This victorious army pursued as rapidly as the obstructions placed by the enemy in his rear would permit, three times overtaking his fleeing

columns and as often driving him with slaughter from the field, leaving numerous dead and wounded in our hands in every conflict. The immediate fruits of our success are the relief of Richmond from a state of siege; the rout of the great army that so long menaced its safety; many thousand prisoners, including officers of high rank; the capture or destruction of stores to the value of millions, and the acquisition of thousands of arms and forty pieces of superior artillery.

The service rendered to the country in this short but eventful period can scarcely be estimated, and the general commanding can not adequately express his admiration of the courage, endurance, and soldierly conduct of the officers and men engaged. These brilliant results have cost us many brave men; but while we mourn the loss of our gallant dead, let us not forget that they died nobly in defence of their country's freedom, and have linked their memory with an event that will live forever in the hearts of a grateful people.

Soldiers, your country will thank you for the heroic conduct you have displayed—conduct worthy of the men engaged in a cause so just and sacred, and deserving a nation's gratitude and praise.

By command of GENERAL LEE.

R. H. CHILTON,

Assistant Adjutant General.



## CHAPTER XIII

### ACTIVE OPERATIONS OPENED. THE BATTLE OF CEDAR RUN, AUGUST 9, 1862

OUR army passed the month of July quietly in the vicinity of Richmond, while General McClellan remained at Harrison's Landing and continued his demands for reënforcements, which availed him nothing, as his requests were unheeded. As there was no probability under these circumstances, that he would contemplate the resumption of operations very soon, Lee decided to assume the offensive, and thus force him from his base. With this purpose in view, toward the end of the month, he directed Jackson to move, with three divisions of infantry and a sufficient quota of artillery and cavalry, to the neighborhood of Gordonsville, with instructions to make a demonstration against the portion of the enemy's force defending the Federal capital, who had advanced nearly to Culpeper Court House.

In the early part of August Jackson marched to the Rapidan, and confronted his old antagonists,—Generals Banks, Fremont, and McDowell, whose commands had been concentrated as the Army of Virginia and placed under the leadership of Gen. John Pope, a Western soldier "from an army whose business it had been to seek the adversary, and to beat him when found."

Somewhere near the same time a demonstration against the lines of McClellan, on the James, was made by a few of our soldiers from the camps near Richmond. This demonstration was under the immediate supervision of Gen. D. H. Hill, who, on the 23d of July, had been placed in command of the Department of the South Side. The purpose of General Lee in this movement was not only to cut off General McClellan's communications, but to secure for himself the ability of sending, without hazard to Richmond, troops to reënforce General Jackson. This expedition was intrusted to the charge of Brig.-Gen. French, who, on the 30th, with 43 pieces of artillery,—3 of which were 32-pounders,—supported by infantry and an escort

of cavalry, moved to the vicinity of Coggin's Point, on the James River, and, when midnight of the 31st arrived, was in readiness for the grand surprise. The following extract, from the official report of General French, gives us an accurate account of what happened :

All being in readiness, and finding the enemy had not discovered us from their reconnoissance in their balloon, at 4 p. m. Colonel Brown proceeded to Maycox's farm, opposite Westover, with twelve guns ; Colonel Coleman followed to Coggin's point, with eight 12-pounder howitzers ; Major Nelson, with eight guns, to a position on the left, higher up the bank of the river ; Colonel Cutts, with eleven long-range guns, still above Major Nelson, and Captains Dabney and Milledge were, each with two siege guns, to take position one-fourth of a mile below the dwelling of Mr. Ruffin, making forty-three guns in all.

As night approached thousands of lights from the shipping and their tents disclosed the objects for attack. The guns were silently conducted over the difficult grounds and winding roads, and before 12 [o'clock] all the guns were in position (except two siege guns, under charge of Captain Milledge) awaiting action. Silence as profound as the darkness of the night reigned in the enemy's camps. At a signal the thunder of over forty guns startled them from their midnight slumbers. From the screams, scenes of wild confusion must have followed, as sailors rushed on the decks of their vessels and soldiers fled from their tents in midnight darkness, amid bursting shells falling fast around them. The gunboats soon returned the fire, and in about fifteen or twenty minutes a rapid fire was opened on us from their land batteries, but without any damage, many of the shots passing over the whole length of the point or peninsula. The red glare of the fire of so many guns and exploding shells on such a night is seldom witnessed. Gradually the firing on our part ceased and the guns were withdrawn under a heavy fire.

Further efforts to obstruct the communications of the Federal army were relinquished, as this demonstration had resulted in the enemy's crossing the river soon after, with a large force, and fortifying Coggin's Point.

This movement, in concert with Jackson's advance, produced on the red tape pullers at the aforesaid metropolis the effect anticipated and desired by General Lee, as will be seen by the following telegram which was sent to General McClellan :

WASHINGTON, August 6, 1862.

MAJOR-GEN. G. B. MCCLELLAN :

You will immediately send a regiment of cavalry and several

batteries of artillery to Burnside's command at Aquia Creek. It is reported that Jackson is moving north with a very large force.

H. W. HALLECK,  
Major-General.

The military strength in front of Washington, exclusive of Burnside's army,—which was at Aquia Creek,—is reckoned at about 50,000 men, while our numbers, including two brigades of cavalry, did not exceed 20,000. General Pope had assigned one corps of his army to a position near Slaughter's Mountain, which is several miles southwest of Culpeper. General Jackson, ascertaining this to be a fact, determined, with his usual clear-sightedness, to make an attack before the two wings could be united; and thus was inaugurated the battle of Cedar Run.

On the 7th of August orders were issued by General Jackson to the divisions of Winder, Ewell, and A. P. Hill, to march in the direction of Culpeper. Hill's division was greatly retarded in its movements by the wagon trains following the troops who preceded them, and because of a misconception of orders, consequently the battle was postponed for twenty-four hours. Everything, however, was in readiness by the 9th, as Hill, having crossed the river in the course of the night, was within supporting distance. The enemy's cavalry was encountered within six or eight miles from Culpeper; but after a few shots from our artillery, they were quickly dislodged, and our column proceeded on their way.

Southwest of Culpeper, and to the right of our line of march, stands the ridge known as Slaughter's Mountain, at the north end of which rises the stream of Cedar Run, from which the battle at this point was named. General Early's brigade, supported by General Winder's division, received orders to move upon the direct road to Culpeper and develop the enemy's strength, while the remainder of General Ewell's division moved to the right and took position upon the northeast end of the mountain. Several batteries of our artillery were posted upon an eminence of about two hundred feet above the plains, which were then in the occupancy of the Federals, who covered the right and center of the Confederates. The guns located upon so elevated a site were beyond the range of the enemy's batteries, and commanded the whole of the open field below.

Early's brigade, having lost no time in pushing forward on the left, was very soon brought in contact with the enemy's

cavalry. Pressing his skirmishers forward, he drove back their videttes, while his line of battle followed. Upon reaching a slight hill,—at the front of which there was a rivulet and beyond the stream a large field of corn,—he halted. Immediately several batteries opened upon him a fire so hot that he withdrew, to seek shelter therefrom below the crest of the hill.

Meanwhile the guns of Brown and Dement, occupying a formidable position on the right, engaged the enemy. Winder's division then advanced, found favorable points on the left, at which he stationed his guns, while his infantry were placed in line. Soon the deafening roar of artillery began, and continuously for two long hours the duel was prolonged. "Then came the tug of war:" the Federal infantry advancing through the cornfield, making charge after charge upon Early's lines, each and every one of which assaults was speedily repulsed with a loss heavy to our assailants, but comparatively light on our side.

Then followed a vigorous effort to turn Early's right by strong lines of infantry. This, however, was entirely frustrated by the well-timed arrival of Hill's division, which, moving rapidly forward, hurled back the advancing foe and all attempts to break our line at that point proved futile. On the left, where Garnett held position, supported by the "Stonewall Brigade," an advance was made with great force by the enemy, who, getting into the rear of our men, by a dexterous flank movement, almost succeeded in turning the tide of battle entirely against us.

The regiments on the extreme left, taken in reverse, were broken and hurled back upon the Twenty-first Virginia; but that regiment notwithstanding the situation, stood their ground firmly, and fought with great heroism, clubbing their muskets and using their bayonets to stay the onward rush of their assailants. However, they were borne back by the opposing multitudes. The left regiment of General Early's line was the famous Thirteenth Virginia, which, presenting an unbroken front to the enemy and retreating slowly, fiercely contested every step of the invader's advance. It was at this critical moment that the eagle glance of our great Jackson comprehended the situation. Spurring to the front along the highway, his face aglow with the fire of battle, he issued his orders, and unsheathing his sword, he cried out in ringing tones to his troops:

"Rally, brave men,—and press forward! Your General will lead you! Jackson will lead you!"

The effect was electrical. At once fleeing men halted in their

rearward course and rallied to the cry; knots of fugitives gathered and vigorously poured deadly volleys into the advancing foe; fragments of regiments collected around their leader and swept the open fields clean of their late occupants. Forward pressed the "Stonewall Brigade" and onward they passed to the left, thus taking the enemy in flank and driving him with terrific slaughter back upon his reserves.

Just at this time in the fight a brigade of fresh troops, of Hill's division, made their appearance on the field, and rushing impetuously upon the discomfited ones, completed the repulse. Blow succeeded blow, struck with such earnestness and such effect, that the foe's forces were driven far to the rear, leaving our brave men in full possession of the field.

The losses were very heavy, as will be seen by the official reports, which place those of the Federals at 2381, and those of the Confederates at 1275.

It was truly a great victory to our army, besides being the forerunner of General Pope's defeat.

As soon as practicable after the battle our wounded were cared for, our dead consigned to the earth, and the spoils most willingly collected by those in need of them, after which our army fell back behind the Rapidan and there went into bivouac to await the arrival of General Longstreet's corps, then ready and on the eve of departure from Richmond.

Extracts from the reports of various officers, both Confederate and Federal, follow

General Lee says:

Repulse vigorously followed on our left and center, and now hotly pressed on our right, the enemy gave way, and his whole line was soon in full retreat. Night had now set in, but General Jackson, desiring to enter Culpeper Court House before morning, determined to pursue. Hill's division led the advance, but owing to the darkness it was compelled to move slowly and with caution. The enemy was found about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles in rear of the field of battle, and information was received that reënforcements had arrived. General Jackson therefore halted for the night, and the next day, becoming satisfied that the enemy's strength had been so largely increased as to render advance on his part imprudent, sent his wounded to the rear, and proceeded to bury the dead and collect the arms from the battle-field.

General Jackson says :

About 5 o'clock the enemy threw forward his skirmishers through the cornfield and advanced his infantry, until then concealed in the woods, to the rear and left of the batteries. Another body of infantry, apparently debouching from one of those valleys hid from the view by the undulating character of the country, moved upon Early's right, which rested near a clump of cedars, where the guns of Brown and Dement were posted. The infantry fight soon extended to the left and center. Early became warmly engaged with the enemy on his right and front. He had previously called for reinforcements. As General Hill had arrived with his division, one of his brigades (General Thomas') was sent to Early, and joined him in time to render efficient service. While the attack upon Early was in progress the main body of the Federal infantry moved down from the wood through the corn and wheat fields, and fell with great vigor upon our extreme left, and by the force of superior numbers, bearing down all opposition, turned it and poured a destructive fire into its rear. Campbell's brigade fell back in disorder. The enemy pushing forward, and the left flank of Taliaferro's brigade being by these movements exposed to a flank fire, fell back, as did also the left of Early's line, the remainder of his command holding its position with great firmness. During the advance of the enemy, the rear of the guns of Jackson's division becoming exposed, they were withdrawn. At this critical moment Branch's brigade, farther to the left, met the Federal forces, flushed with their temporary triumph, and drove them back with terrible slaughter through the wood. The fight was still maintained with obstinancy between the enemy and the two brigades just named, when, Archer and Pender coming up, a general charge was made, which drove the enemy across the field into the opposite wood, strewing the narrow valley with their dead.

In this charge Archer's brigade was subjected to a heavy fire.

At this time the Federal cavalry charged upon Taliaferro's brigade in its front, and by so galling a fire from Branch's brigade in flank, that it was forced rapidly from the field with loss and in disorder.

In the meantime General Ewell, on the right, found himself kept back from advancing by the incessant fire from our batteries in the valley, which swept his only approach to the enemy's left. This difficulty no longer existing, he moved with his two brigades (Trimble in the advance) and pressed forward under a heavy fire from the enemy's artillery, the front covered by skirmishers from the Fifteenth Alabama, and the brigades advancing *en échelon* of regiments. Thus repulsed from our left and center, and now pressed by our right, center, and left, the Federal force fell back at every

point of their line and commenced retreating, leaving their dead and wounded on the field of battle.

On the 11th a flag of truce was received from the enemy, who requested permission until 2 o'clock to remove and bury his dead not already interred by our troops. This was granted, and the time subsequently extended, by request of the enemy, to 5 o'clock in the evening.

General Wilson, of the Federal army, says :

At this time this brigade occupied the interior line of the strip of woods in front of its original position. A field, varying from 250 to 500 yards in width, partly wheat stubble and partly scrub-oak underbrush, lay between it and the next strip of woods. In moving across this field the three right regiments and the six companies of the Third Wisconsin were received by a terrific fire of musketry both from the underbrush, from the wheat field, and from the woods. The Third Wisconsin especially fell under a partial flank fire from the underbrush and woods, which swept its right companies with great destruction, and under which Lieutenant-Colonel Crane fell, pierced with several fatal wounds, and the regiment was obliged to give way. The enemy was, however, driven out of the open field by the other regiments and some distance into the woods, where being strongly reënforced, their fire became overwhelming. No better proof of its terrific character can be given than the fact that of the three remaining regiments which continued the charge (Twenty-eighth New York, Forty-sixth Pennsylvania, and Fifth Connecticut) every field officer and every adjutant was killed or disabled. In the Twenty-eighth New York every company officer was killed or wounded ; in the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania all but 5 ; in the Fifth Connecticut all but 8. A combat more persistent or heroic can scarcely be found in the history of war ; but men of even this unequalled heroism could not withstand the overwhelming numbers of the enemy, especially when left without the encouragement and direction of officers.

#### STUART TO THE REAR

Longstreet's corps broke camp on the Darbytown road, six miles below Richmond, on the 10th day of August, and by daylight had taken up the line of march for the city. This point was reached in time for us to occupy the trains for Gordonsville. By the 16th the forces of the Army of Northern Virginia were concentrated between Gordonsville and Orange Court House. The route of the march was in the direction of Fredericksburg. Passing down the Plank Road we crossed the Rapidan and

pursued a southeasterly course toward the Rappahannock. The army of Pope still lingered in the vicinity of Culpeper, in such position as exposed it to thrusts on both the right and the left. General Lee, upon his arrival, about the 16th, was soon aware of the facts of the case, and decided to give battle. Orders to this end were issued on the 18th, but for satisfactory reasons the advance could not be made until the 20th. In the meantime General Pope's suspicions having been aroused, he moved his troops rearward and established them in a strong position on the east bank of the Rappahannock. General Lee marched his forces forward, with Jackson in the front and Longstreet bringing up the rear.

As they approached Kelly's Ford on the 21st, the enemy opened fire from a field battery upon the head of Longstreet's columns, but were pretty soon persuaded by one or two hearty rounds from our artillery to seek other amusement, and our command proceeded on its way. The position of the Federal Army was much too strong for us to hazard a direct attack, so our commander promptly decided to turn it. As a preliminary to this movement, General J. E. B. Stuart was ordered to General Pope's rear, to acquaint himself with that officer's line of communications and to secure a taste of the rare quality of his commissary stores. Taking with him a brigade of cavalry, he lost no time in passing around the Federal right; and striking the railroad at Catlett's Station in the middle of the night, he captured three hundred prisoners, General Pope's official papers and baggage, and then fired the Federal leader's camp, thus fully illustrating the pith of one of Pope's own maxims, "Disaster and shame lurk in the rear."

The following extract is from General J. E. B. Stuart's official report:

Lee's brigade was in advance, and the artillery being intrusted to one of Robertson's regiments [Twelfth Virginia Cavalry], the head of the column pushed on by the village of Auburn, reaching the immediate vicinity of Catlett's Station soon after. Rosser being again in front, by his good address and consummate skill, captured the picket, and we soon found ourselves in the midst of the enemy's encampments, but the darkest night I ever knew.

Fortunately we captured at this moment, so critical, a negro who had known me in Berkeley, and who, recognizing me, informed me of the location of General Pope's staff, baggage, horses, etc., and offered to guide to the spot. After a brief consultation it was de-



terminated to accept the negro's proposition, as whatever was to be done had to be done quickly, and Brig.-Gen. Fitz-Lee selected Col. W. H. F. Lee's regiment for the work. The latter led his command boldly to within a few feet of the tents occupied by the convivial staff of General Pope and charged the camp, capturing a large number of prisoners, particularly officers, and securing public property to a fabulous amount. While this was going on, the First and Fifth Virginia Cavalry were sent to attack another camp beyond the railroad and obstruct the latter. This was gallantly done, under the dashing lead of Colonels Rosser and [L. T.] Brien, over ground exceedingly difficult, crossing a heavy filling of the railroad, with ditches each side, amid darkness and a perfect torrent of rain. The lights were extinguished at the first pistol-shot, and the only light left to guide was the flash of the enemy's guns from the wagons, in which they took speedy refuge. It will readily be perceived that under such circumstances successful attack by a charge, mounted, was impossible, and its further prosecution was deferred for the accomplishment of what was the great object of the expedition,—the destruction of the Cedar Run railroad bridge. Captain Blackford, with a picked party, set about this arduous undertaking, but owing to the fact that everything was saturated with water, ignition was impossible. Axes were looked up in the darkness with great difficulty, and the energetic and thorough-going [W. C.] Wickham was sent with his regiment [Fourth Virginia Cavalry] to effect its destruction by cutting it down, and finally Brigadier-General Lee went in person to superintend it; but the difficulties were insuperable, for the enemy on the other side of the stream, where a cliff afforded excellent protection, were already firing upon our men, who, in this rain, which had greatly swollen the stream, met difficulty at every step.

While these attempts were going on, other portions of the command were securing horses, and other valuable property from the enemy's camp in our possession and conducting the large numbers of prisoners to the rear. The enemy collected after their first stampede enough to fire a volley into the burning camp, but without injury.

Brigadier-General Robertson's command was held in reserve, of which the Twelfth Regiment had not yet arrived, being detained by the artillery.

The streams [Cedar Run and Rappahannock] were in my rear, and the former was reported already swimming, and the rain still continued. This cavalry had had a long march, without intermission, and being the greater part of the cavalry of the army, its return without delay was necessary. These considerations determined me to leave before daylight with what had been accomplished. I accordingly retired by the same route.

As day dawned I found among the great number of prisoners

Pope's field quartermaster, Major Goulding, and ascertained that the chief quartermaster and Pope's aide-de-camp, Col. L. H. Marshall, narrowly escaped the same fate. The men of the command had secured Pope's uniform and horses and equipments, money-chests, and a great variety of uniforms and personal baggage, but what was of peculiar value was the dispatch book of General Pope, which contained information of great importance to us, throwing light upon the strength, movements, and designs of the enemy, and disclosing General Pope's own views against his ability to defend the line of the Rappahannock. These and many others, to which it is needless now to refer, were transmitted to the commanding general at the time, and no copies were kept by me.

The enemy's killed we had no means of ascertaining. Our own loss in killed, wounded, and missing was slight, a circumstance affording peculiar reason for congratulation, under the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the enterprise. Over 300 prisoners, of whom a large number were officers, were marched safely within our lines at Warrenton Springs, on August 23, where General Jackson was found constructing a bridge.

#### ON THE MARCH

General Jackson's corps moved along quietly up the river, and on the 22nd they reached the Warrenton Road, at which point the bridge over the Rappahannock River had been entirely destroyed. Finding an available crossing on the ruins of an old milldam, a mile below, he passed Early's brigade, two batteries of artillery, and the Thirteenth Georgia Regiment, of Lawton's brigade, across to the other side, where they took position on the wooded ridge of hills overlooking the east bank of the river. Night closing in at this time, with a very heavy rainstorm, arrested the crossing of the remainder of the force, and the volumes of falling water soon resulted in the river becoming so swollen as to be impassable; and thus it was that General Early was placed in a position of great peril. In close proximity to him were several strong divisions of the Federal army, and very naturally great anxiety prevailed in his behalf, lest, as was confidently expected, the isolated command might be annihilated as soon as the following day should dawn.

But our noble Early was too keenly alive to the emergency to be so easily caught. The wise advice and firm support of Jackson, combined with his own great skill, effected his relief. Jackson counseled him to form his lines at dawn across the

highlands near the Warrenton Springs—a beautiful summer resort nearby—and there await the development of events. Jackson in the meantime diligently urged forward the construction of a temporary bridge, upon which in the afternoon the remainder of Lawton's brigade passed to Early's support. By this time General Pope's whole army was at hand, and could at one fell blow have crushed from existence Early's comparative handful of troops while thus detached; had he not, with an efficiency truly his own, so handled his little army, and so adroitly concealed his numbers in the forest, that his artillery kept at bay the superior forces of the enemy so successfully as to render it impossible for them to make a decisive attack before nightfall, when it was too late to undertake it.

The dawn of the following morning made apparent the fact that General Early had recrossed the river, and, with every man and every gun, had rejoined General Jackson, leaving no trophy behind him. By that time General Longstreet had arrived and was engaging the enemy with artillery. The duel was fierce and protracted, lasting throughout the day (Aug. 25). During its progress Jackson moved his corps to our rear, then, passing still further on to our left, undertook the mighty exploit—the adventurous and brilliant achievement—that must ever be of thrilling interest to readers of the annals of the Great War.

While General Longstreet remained in position on the Rappahannock, in order to tickle the then confident General of the Army of Virginia and entertain him, "Stonewall," in obedience to instructions from General Lee, was making a bold march to the enemy's rear. After leaving the neighborhood of Jeffersonton early on the morning of the 25th—his troops in light marching order and his trains, except ammunition and ambulance, left in the rear—he crossed the two branches of the Rappahannock and pursuing the Orleans or Mountain Road, had by nightfall reached the village of Salem (now known as Marshall), a distance of twenty-five miles from his starting point; and here, without demurring, they rested through the night.

The following morning betimes those columns were in motion, passing through the Plains, a village several miles from Salem, and on through Thoroughfare Gap, in the Bull Run Mountains, and Gainesville to Bristoe Station, on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad. At Gainesville he was joined by General Stuart, who employed his cavalry in guarding his flanks and in keeping strict watch upon the adversary. It was about

sunset when the head of the column reached the vicinity of Bristoe. Several passing trains of cars were halted and captured.

At Manassas, four miles to the east, there had been accumulated vast quantities of army stores for the subsistence of Pope's army. The necessity for utilizing them was very apparent to Jackson, for his own men were without rations and very hungry; so immediately after striking the railroad, he dispatched his cavalry—with the support of two regiments of infantry, under command of General Stuart—to make the attack and secure the booty.

Under cover of the darkness of the moonless night the fortifications were approached, and the infantry formed for the assault. A brigade of cavalry marched to the enemy's rear, to prevent their escape. Availing themselves of the early dawn the infantry moved forward, and were saluted by volleys from artillery at short range; but the demands of hunger and a unanimous decision to obtain ownership in those provisions nerved them to press boldly on until they surmounted the works, leaped within the entrenchments, and made captive every living thing that came within their grasp.

Two batteries of artillery, three hundred and fifty prisoners, two hundred and fifty horses, and stores in immense quantities, besides trains of cars, two miles in length, laden with commissary stores for the comfort of General Pope and his men, thus changed hands. There was no time lost by our ravenous men in testing the superior brands of the good things thus furnished, but sardines, sweetmeats, potted game, and delicacies of like grade were most enjoyably disposed of by the almost exhausted Confederates.

The early arrival of General Jackson on that day relieved Stuart's men, who had been under arms for days and nights.

It was not long before a shot from the direction of Bull Run gave unmistakable evidence that our antagonists were not asleep. Succeeding this, a brigade of their infantry moved from the same quarter, seemingly impressed with the idea that only a few cavalymen were to be brushed aside, and so, with stately tread and soldierly mien, they advanced—but not to the performance of the trivial duty assigned them. They found their own guns had been captured and turned against them. Other batteries belonging to General Jackson's command decimated their ranks with shot and shell; yet they still advanced. Jackson, quickly comprehending their extremity, and having compassion on his

foes in so terrible a strait, attempted a parley, and, waving a white handkerchief in pledge of truce, moved toward them alone, hoping to induce them to accept quarter. He was met by a volley of musketry. As he had thus signally failed to arrest their obstinate resistance, he returned to his subordinates and ordered them to let loose upon them his dogs of war in all their fury. In a little while the Federals were completely dazed, their commander having fallen mortally wounded, and their regiments were driven from the field, with a loss of 339 men.

## CHAPTER XIV

CONCENTRATION OF THE CONFEDERATES, AUGUST, 1862

WHEN General Jackson, with the divisions of Gen. A. P. Hill and General Taliaferro, moved from Bristoe Station toward Manassas, on the morning of the 27th, General Ewell with his own division and two regiments of cavalry remained to watch the movements of the enemy and to retard his advance as long as circumstances rendered it practicable. Carefully posting his men, many of whom were masked in heavy pine bushes that skirted the approaches, he leisurely awaited developments.

It was in the afternoon when from the direction of Warrenton the Federals came marching on. As we were prepared to receive them, it was not necessary for them to come very near before our batteries opened their salute. The Union men continued to advance, and assaulted our lines most spiritedly; our first volley, however, discomposed their nerves, and away they went,—many of them discarding their arms as they ran. Their places were soon filled by others, and our lines were attacked a second time, with a very similar result. The fact that General Pope's main army was at hand now became apparent to General Ewell; and orders to retire and unite with Jackson's forces at Manassas were consequently issued.

To effect this *coup de maître* successfully required extraordinary generalship and prompt intelligent subordination to orders on the part of the soldiery; for withdrawing from the front of a numerically superior force that is advancing for attack is by no means a sinecure for either rank or file. As the troops first receiving the assault were moved across the stream, others steadily filled their places and held the enemy in check, until the residue of the division had crossed the run, which separated them from Manassas. This having been accomplished without the loss of a single man, the small body that held the lines then withdrew under cover of the cavalry, destroyed the bridge across the run, and joining the column, marched to the village named.

There was no effort made by the enemy that night to pursue us. Such of the stores, cars, and other spoils as could not be carried away from General Pope's great storehouse at Manassas were turned into fuel for gigantic bonfires. This part of the program over, the place was deserted, and our troops marched away, fully appreciative of the magnitude of their victory; each division taking a different route, but all aiming to reach one designated point near Groveton, north of the Warrenton road.

Jackson had faithfully executed the gigantic feat that Lee had confidently entrusted to his skill. General Pope's predicament was not an enviable one; for his rear had been pierced, his stores confiscated, his communication with the Federal capital completely cut off, and an army of 20,000 men placed between him and his friends.

The effect of this sudden appearance of General Jackson, as a wedge between General Pope and the city of Washington, was overwhelming to the Federal authorities at that point. The Army of the Potomac was at once recalled from the James River, and General McClellan was appointed to the command of the defenses around Washington. The strongholds and continuous lines of earthworks from the Chain Bridge to Fort Lyon, south of Alexandria, were manned without delay by all the available troops that could be brought to the front. Divisions took up the line of march toward Fairfax Court House, for the purpose of supporting Pope, and everything that could tend as a safeguard in defending the great city was put in requisition.

We turn from this picture to follow most cheerfully Longstreet to the rescue. We left him, in our last mention of him, on the Rappahannock, amusing the strangers who had come to spy out the land, under General Pope's tutelage. Late on the 26th, information reached General Pope, bringing conviction that something had gone amiss and causing him to retire toward Manassas. The head of our corps, crossing the river at Hinson's Ford, clambered up the opposite side,—though rocky and rugged it surely was,—followed by the residue, and found bivouac in a wheat-field near the summit of the hill.

The march was resumed on the 27th, and about midday we came within sight of the beautiful little town of Salem. A halt was called on the peak of the hills overlooking the grand valley below; and here a rumor was circulated that Generals Lee and Longstreet had very recently narrowly escaped capture. This proved to be really so. Attended by only the usual escort of aides

and couriers, the group were some distance in advance of the column on the approach to Salem. As they reached the crest of the hill overlooking the town, a horseman came riding speedily toward them, shouting as he approached:

"The Yankee cavalry are upon us!"

Almost as he spoke the head of a moving mass of horsemen came in sight, galloping rapidly forward at only a few hundred yards' distance. It was a moment of thrilling peril. Should the advance be continued at its present gait, Lee and Longstreet would be in the grasp of the enemy; for only ten or twelve men composed the accompanying group. But rapidity of thought, culminating in skilful action, soon changed the position of affairs, and all was well with them. The escort had instantly formed themselves into line, spreading across the road, while the generals, acceding to the earnest request of their escort, retired. The advancing enemy, realizing the fact that a line of horsemen covered the entire breadth of the road, and being unable to see that there were no other troops at either end of the line in a border of dense scrubby pines, very naturally took it for granted that a considerable body of the enemy was in ambush awaiting their attack. This caused a very sudden halt on the part of the Federals; who after gazing intently for a moment, wheeled quickly and without firing a shot, rode rapidly back in the direction of Salem.

A delay of six or eight hours was occasioned by this incident. We were without cavalry, because all belonging to that branch of the service were with Jackson, with the exception of the guard in charge of the wagon-train. With all the dispatch practicable a detachment was forwarded to the front to ascertain the exact status of affairs.

Night overtook us before we were on the move again, and midnight found us in the neighborhood of the Plains, where we remained until the following morning, which was the 28th.

The march was resumed and about noonday, as the vanguard of the corps was passing quietly along the railroad track through the narrow pass in the mountains,—known as Thoroughfare Gap,—the enemy, concealed behind the great boulders of rock on either side, fired with telling effect, killing and wounding quite a number of our men.

We found that they occupied a strong position, and to dislodge them would require time and hard work. Again a halt was called, and steps taken to secure Hopewell Gap several miles to



the north, as it was important to have it in possession in event of our inability to carry Thoroughfare. To effect the success of this necessary scheme, General Wilcox, with three brigades, started forward under orders to secure it. Simultaneously with the move, General Hood was hurrying by forced marches over the mountain footpaths. At the east end of the gap the enemy was strongly posted on the slopes of the mountain. Before the detachments of Wilcox and Hood had accomplished their purpose, two brigades of General Jones' division passed through the gap, and taking position among the rocks on each side of the railroad, made a brisk attack and were successful in driving out the recent occupants and taking entire possession themselves.

A number of Federal dead and wounded were left in our hands.

Our brigades bivouacked on the eastern side of Thoroughfare Gap until the succeeding morning, when the head of the column took up the line of march in the direction of Groveton.

## CHAPTER XV

THE BATTLE OF GROVETON. AUGUST 29, 1862

**T**HAT 29th day of August, 1862, was memorable, our march being excessively severe owing to the sultry, parching atmosphere, and the scarcity of water in our route, except what remained in ditches and stagnant pools. So intense became the thirst for water that, regardless of its slimy green covering, its visible animalculæ, and its temperature, which was 'way above 80 degrees Fahrenheit, wherever a pool existed it was eagerly drained by the half famished men who, under other circumstances, would have revolted at the idea.

It was not midday when we arrived at a point on the Warrenton Turnpike commanding an unobstructed view of the severe engagement in progress on the front between General Jackson's troops and the enemy. On an eminence to the left of the road, west of Groveton and overlooking the battle-field, were Generals Lee, Longstreet, and other officers of the corps, silently watching the ebb and flow of the tide of battle.<sup>1</sup> Jackson's lines were to the left, and north of the Warrenton and Alexandria turnpike, his right in the rear of, and northwest of Groveton, while his left rested near Sudley Church. The lines faced southeast on his left and center, and south on his right.

As it is desirable to note more particularly General Jackson's movements at this point, we will turn to the happenings that took place soon after the concentration of the Army of the Valley on the location and line of defense hereinbefore described. On the 28th of August, before the sun had reached the meridian, the Confederate arrangements were barely completed, when, from the direction of Warrenton, moving gracefully down the turnpike, came one of the Federal columns, which proved to be General McDowell's corps en route for Manassas.

General Jackson, impressed with the idea that the enemy was pursuing his way to Centreville, promptly determined to attack him, and made his preparations accordingly. Several batteries

<sup>1</sup> The writer was within ten feet of the group.

were deployed, and they speedily opened fire upon the unwelcome guests, believing them to be not numerically powerful, as there was good reason for supposing that their main army was moving from the road in line of march for Manassas. A brigade of General Taliaferro's was quickly forwarded, with orders to obstruct this advance by continuous skirmishing,—the remaining brigades being held in reserve,—and General Ewell's division took position within supporting distance. A considerable number of the Federal corps had moved on far ahead, toward Manassas, and as Taliaferro's men were deploying, the front lines came in contact with the troops of King's division, who were halted and formed for defense.

From this encounter ensued the engagement known as the Battle of Groveton.

Jackson's artillery poured shot and shell continuously into the Federal ranks, shooting over the heads of our men, but the opposing batteries responded with such accuracy that the Confederate gunners were compelled to change their position. The infantry, now being called into requisition, took up their work in earnest, and the musketry rattle blended its tones with those of the roaring cannons. Hotly waged the combat until it became furious. Sunset came, and the twilight had long set in, and still not one foot of ground had been gained by the contestants on either side. Each fought with unrelenting determination and unrelaxing courage. Nine o'clock had arrived before the enemy relinquished the contest, and falling back in good order, left us in possession of the field.

The following incident is given just as it was narrated by a participant in the fight to the writer, who does not vouch for its unimpeachability in repeating it, though it is said to have been the cause of the Federal retreat.

About 9 o'clock Jackson, noticing a line of the enemy posted behind a post and rail fence in Ewell's front,—a line against which our men had repeatedly charged and been repulsed,—ordered two of his special scouts to take charge of Wooding's Battery, of Danville, Va., and place it in position on the left, by which that line could be enfiladed. General Ewell had fallen, severely wounded, and his men had been getting the worst of the contest. The battery consisted of four pieces,—one of them being a 12-pounder Napoleon,—and had present for duty 72 men, rank and file.

The order was instantly obeyed. Driving down the valleys

between the hills that band of noble heroes reached a point about 400 yards distant from the location to post the guns,—a point from which the line of the enemy behind the fence, which was giving the Confederates so much trouble, could be enfiladed. Just there the real danger began. As the dashing column emerged from the protection of the friendly hills, in full view of the Federals on their right, they were met by a tornado of musketry that emptied many a saddle, and stayed many a fiery charger in his onward leap. It was a veritable sheet of flame. First one and then another of the guns dropped out. All the horses and most of the men fell by the way. The *thud, thud, thud* of the death-dealing bullets, as they struck men and animals during that terrible ride into the jaws of death, could be heard above the roar of battle by the few survivors. One gun only,—the 12-pounder Napoleon,—was gotten into position, and that had to be drawn about fifty feet by hand. It was speedily turned upon the blue coats behind the fence and opened fire upon them. At the same time our brave infantry charged, and the tide of battle was turned. The flank movement by the artillery was more than man could stand; the enemy fell back and left the field in our possession. But the cost was fearful. Out of 72 men who so gallantly rode in the race of death only 22 were left. Every horse belonging to the battery had been killed or disabled. The brave scouts and Captain Wooding, with 19 of the men, were fortunate to escape with their lives. For danger and daring, that was a ride unequalled during the War!

As before stated, it was nine o'clock that night before our first bloody battle with the troops of General Pope's command drew to a close. The commanders of the two Confederate divisions, Generals Taliaferro and Ewell, were both wounded during the engagement,—the latter so seriously that the amputation of one leg became necessary to preserve his life. Jackson lost a number of his braves, among them many officers. His position was peculiarly perilous, as the bulk of Pope's army was around him, and only skilful management, combined with the finest kind of fighting, enabled him to retain it.

Wistfully the road which led from Thoroughfare Gap was watched on the morning of the 29th, for from that point Longstreet's hardy veterans were expected. Pope's army was concentrated, intent upon the scheme of "bagging" Jackson, while our wary general, conscious of his own strength, and in firm conviction that Longstreet was near and steadily approaching to lend a

hand, composedly awaited the storm, after arranging as far as practicable to hurl the enemy back at each advance upon him.

Gen. Wm. B. Taliaferro, commanding First Division, says of this battle:

The batteries of Captains Wooding, Poague, and Carpenter were placed in position in front of the Fourth Brigade and just above the village of Groveton, and firing over the heads of the skirmishers, poured a most destructive shower of shot and shell upon the enemy. This was responded to by a most severe fire, and a new position was selected to the right of the First Brigade, which enfiladed the enemy's guns and ultimately drove them from the field.

At this time our lines were advanced from the woods in which they had been concealed to the open field. The troops moved forward with splendid gallantry and in most perfect order. Twice our lines were advanced until we had reached a farmhouse and orchard on the right of our line and were in about 80 yards of a greatly superior force of the enemy. Here one of the most terrific conflicts that can be conceived of occurred. Our troops held the farmhouse and one edge of the orchard, while the enemy held the orchard and enclosure next to the turnpike. To our left there was no cover, and our men stood in the open field, without shelter of any kind. The enemy, although reënforced, never once attempted to advance upon our position, but withstood with great determination the terrible fire which our lines poured upon them. For two hours and a half, without an instant's cessation of the most deadly discharges of musketry, round shot, and shell, both lines stood unmoved, neither advancing and neither broken nor yielding, until at last, about 9 o'clock at night, the enemy slowly and sullenly fell back and yielded the field to our victorious troops.

Brig.-General John Gibbon, U. S. Army, thus speaks of the battle:

The division was marching on Centreville from Gainesville, my brigade following General Hatch's, on the Warrenton turnpike, in the following order. Hatch's artillery was engaging the enemy in front, when from a point to his left and rear one of the enemy's batteries opened on my column. I directed the men to lie down in the road, and ordered up Captain Campbell with the battery. It came up at a gallop, formed in battery under a heavy fire, and opened with such vigor that the enemy's battery was soon silenced and made to retire. In the meantime I found that two of the enemy's pieces had been planted to our left and rear and were firing on Doubleday's brigade, which was behind us. I had no information of the presence of an infantry force in that position, which was occupied by General

Hatch in person not three-fourths of an hour before. I therefore supposed that this was one of the enemy's cavalry batteries, and ordered the Second Wisconsin to face to the left and march obliquely to the rear against these pieces, to take them in flank. As it rose an intervening hill, it was opened upon by some infantry on its right flank. The left wing was thrown forward to bring the regiment facing the enemy, and the musketry firing became very warm. The Nineteenth Indiana was now ordered up in support and formed on the left of the Second Wisconsin, while the Seventh Wisconsin was directed to hold itself in reserve. As the enemy appeared to be now heavily reënforced, the Sixth and Seventh Wisconsin were both ordered into line, and I sent repeated and earnest requests to division headquarters for assistance. Two of General Doubleday's regiments finally got into line, and the fight was kept up vigorously until after dark, when, finding that we were far outnumbered and outflanked on our left, where I at length lost all hope of getting help from Patrick's brigade, I ordered the line to fall back, which was done in good order. We, however, occupied the ground with our pickets and collected the wounded.

Of the conduct of my brigade it is only necessary for me to state that it nobly maintained its position against heavy odds. The fearful list of the killed and wounded tells the rest. The troops fought most of the time not more than 75 yards apart. The total loss of the brigade is, killed 133; wounded 530; missing 79. Total 751, or considerably over one-third.

The Federal commander had massed large bodies of infantry and artillery on the "Stonewall" front, with a very sanguine determination to break it in pieces, or annihilate it, before the long-expected support could arrive. This was in the morning, before the head of Longstreet's corps had reached the vicinity of General Jackson's right, posted near Groveton. Feeling for Jackson, the enemy's artillery had opened its exercises early, and before the preparations were perfected for rushing his dense columns against the slim lines of the Confederates, Longstreet was falling into position on the right, so as to be in readiness at the proper time for his veterans to pay their respects to the enemy's left. We arrived on the field in the rear of General Pope's left, which was the portion of his lines engaging Jackson's right, and within easy artillery range, and were thus disposed of: "Some of Brig.-Gen. Hood's batteries were ordered into position, and his Division was deployed on the right and left of the turnpike, at right angles with it, and supported by Brig.-Gen. Evans's Brigade. Three brigades, under Gen. Wilcox, were thrown forward to

the support of the left, and three others under Gen. Kemper, to the support of the right of these commands. Gen. D. R. Jones' Division was placed upon the Manassas Gap Railroad to the right and in echelon with regard to the three last brigades."

The batteries that had taken position on an elevated range of hills between Jackson's right and Longstreet's left,—a gap of about a half mile,—immediately went into action. It was now about 2 o'clock and Pope's hammering process was inaugurated and he hurled line after line of infantry upon Jackson's left, which was near Sudley Church. As these hurrying masses arrived within close range of Gen. A. P. Hill's gallant command, which held the left, they were repulsed with slaughter, and retired in confusion. Thereupon lines of gigantic proportions were quickly forwarded successively, until six had met a similar fate. Just at this time it was that, through an unguarded space between two of Hill's brigades, the enemy entered and filled the opening with numbers of his infantry; but two regiments of our reserve advanced promptly to within ten paces of the exulting foe and poured into them a fire of musketry so effective as to force them to relinquish their hold, and our lines were reestablished.

The contest now raged with unabated fury for hours. It is said that when General Hill sent to the noble Gregg to know if he could hold his own, he received this answer:

"Tell him I have no ammunition, but I will hold my position with the bayonet."

In many instances ammunition was entirely exhausted, but it caused no relaxation in the fight; and in several places, within a few yards of the enemy, our men held their own by using the cold steel in defense and defiance. There were other parts of the lines where, laying aside their muskets, the Confederates resorted to beating back the foe with stones picked up in the railroad cut. After seven long hours of conflict their physical strength waned and they could do no more. They were, however, relieved by Early's brigade, the Eighth Louisiana, and the Thirteenth Georgia regiments.

The Federals had by this time gained the occupancy of a considerable portion of our lines on the railroad cut. General Early, making a rapid advance upon them, drove them out with fearful slaughter. The center, where Ewell's command was posted, had a good share in the fray, but the brunt of the many onslaughts was borne by the left, where, at the close of the battle, a ghastly, heart-thrilling picture was presented. The dark lines of Federal

dead clearly defined their position in the fight, and evidenced the unwavering courage of the men; for more than a mile the woods and fields were strewn with the dead and wounded. Hill's losses were severe, and several of his officers were disabled by wounds.

Longstreet was not idle while Jackson was battling so nobly for the success of the cause. Word was received late in the afternoon from Gen. "Jeb" Stuart, our grand cavalry leader (whose loss we afterwards so deeply mourned), that a column of the enemy was approaching on the right. This force was afterward ascertained to have been General Porter's division of the Federal army composed of 10,000 men, which had been sent to force back General Jackson's right. Quick-witted and ever on the alert, our noble Stuart, being well aware of his insufficiency in numbers to cope with so formidable a body as that approaching, resorted to a ruse that was most admirably effective in securing the desired result. He detailed some of his horsemen to procure heavy brush and to drag it along, back and forth, over the parched, dusty roads, thus raising heavy clouds of dust and giving the appearance of large masses of troops in motion.

Upon intelligence being received that our right was being menaced, General Wilcox was detached from the left, and started to the support of General Jones, but the threateners were satisfied after firing a few shots, and moved off to their right, where General Jackson's left was being assaulted most pertinaciously. General Wilcox then returned and resumed his former position, and General Hood's division was pressed forward to the attack. Simultaneously with this movement, the commands of Wilcox and Hunton also advanced. According to Longstreet's report:

The enemy were met in quite a severe combat, and in about an hour's time were driven back for at least a mile, losing two guns. After which we fell back to our former position, to the lines first occupied and in the original order.

The fearful struggle of that day continued until the darkness of night closed it. In its progress of seven hours, blood was profusely shed, and the dead lay piled in heaps, more especially on that portion of the field occupied by Jackson's left and center. Our Federal assailants had suffered severely, and the Confederates were weary, hungry, and sad. Aye, more than sad,—for around them were numbers of their comrades, dead, dying and wounded. It is wonderful indeed to look back from our present standpoint upon those soul-stirring days and realize fully the



immense odds against which Jackson's men battled on those memorable fields. The sublimity of soldierly spirit was ever astir in those frames reduced to gauntness by continuous hard duty, hunger appeased at long intervals, and anxiety for loved ones in far-away homes. Ever was the call to action promptly met, whether to face for repulse masses of the enemy hurled against them and constantly thinning their ranks, or for other duty. Notwithstanding the lack of the commonest necessities,—a privation usually so exhausting to physical strength,—these men, when the foe was to be beaten back, were ready each man to do his part. Such heroism won for them the well-merited appellation: "The Stonewall Brigade," which title placed them upon the highest pinnacle of military glory. But little respite was ever allowed before another clash of arms engaged them, another victory to be achieved and then,—what? Rest? No; only a repetition of the marching and the fighting,—fight after fight,—sustained by the ripening corn as their daily meat; their only pillow for the night, the green sod of mother earth.

The following extracts from the official reports,—“War Records,”—will enable the reader to learn more of this sanguinary contest.

General Jackson says:

The next morning (29th) I found that he had abandoned the ground occupied as the battle-field the evening before and had moved farther to the east and to my left, placing himself between my command and the Federal capital. My troops on this day were distributed along and in the vicinity of the cut of an unfinished railroad [intended as a part of the track to connect the Manassas road directly with Alexandria], stretching from the Warrenton turnpike in the direction of Sudley's Mill. It was mainly along the excavation of this unfinished road that my line of battle was formed on the 29th. Jackson's division, under Brigadier-General Starke, on the right, Ewell's division, under Brigadier-General Lawton, in the center, and Hill's division on the left.

In the morning, about 10 o'clock, the Federal artillery opened with spirit and animation upon our right, which was soon replied to by the batteries of Poague, Carpenter, Dement, Brockenbrough, and Latimer, under Major [L. M.] Shumaker. This lasted for some time, when the enemy moved around more to our left to another point of attack. His next effort was directed against our left. This was vigorously repulsed by the batteries of Braxton, Crenshaw, and Pegram.

About 2 p. m. the Federal infantry in large force advanced to

the attack of our left, occupied by the division of General Hill. It pressed forward in defiance of our fatal and destructive fire, with great determination, a portion of it crossing a deep cut in the railroad track and penetrating in heavy force an interval of nearly 170 yards, which separated the right of Gregg's from the left of Thomas' brigade. For a short time Gregg's brigade, on the extreme left, was isolated from the main body of the command; but the Fourteenth South Carolina Regiment, then in reserve, with the Forty-ninth Georgia, left of Colonel Thomas, attacked the exultant enemy with vigor, and drove them back across the railroad track, with great slaughter. General McGowan reports that the opposing forces at one time delivered their volleys into each other at the distance of 10 paces. Assault after assault was made on the left, exhibiting on the part of the enemy great pertinacity and determination, but every advance was most successfully and gallantly driven back.

General Hill reports that six separate and distinct assaults were thus met and repulsed by his division, assisted by Hays' brigade, Colonel Forno commanding.

By this time the brigade of General Gregg, which from its position on the extreme left was most exposed to the enemy's attack, had nearly expended its ammunition. It had suffered severely in its men, and all its field officers except two were killed or wounded. About four o'clock it had been assisted by Hays' brigade (Colonel Forno). It was now retired to the rear to take some repose after seven hours of severe service, and General Early's brigade, of Ewell's division, with the Eighth Louisiana Regiment, took its place. On reaching his position, General Early found that the enemy had obtained possession of the railroad and a piece of wood in front, there being at this point a deep cut, which furnished a strong defence. Moving through a field he advanced upon the enemy, drove them from the wood and railroad cut with great slaughter, and followed in pursuit some 200 yards; the Thirteenth Georgia at the same time advanced to the railroad and crossed with Early's brigade. As it was not desirable to bring on a general engagement that evening, General Early was recalled to the railroad, where Thomas, Pender, and Archer had firmly maintained their position during the day. Early kept his position there until the following morning.

Gen. A. P. Hill's report says:

Friday morning, in accordance with orders from General Jackson, I occupied the line of the unfinished railroad, my extreme left resting near Sudley Ford, my right near the point where the road strikes the open field, Gregg, Field, and Thomas in the front line,—Gregg on the left, and Field on the right, with Branch, Pender, and Archer as supports. My batteries were in the open field in rear of

the infantry, the nature of my position being such as to preclude the effective use of much artillery. The evident intention of the enemy this day was to turn our left and overwhelm Jackson's corps before Longstreet came up, and to accomplish this the most persistent and furious onsets were made by column after column of infantry, accompanied by numerous batteries of artillery. Soon my reserves were all in, and up to 6 o'clock my division, assisted by the Louisiana Brigade of General Hays, commanded by Colonel Forno, with a heroic courage and obstinacy almost beyond parallel, had met and repulsed six distinct and separate assaults, a portion of the time the majority of the men being without a cartridge. The reply of the gallant Gregg to a message of mine is worthy of note: "Tell General Hill that my ammunition is exhausted, but that I will hold my position with the bayonet." The enemy prepared for a last and determined attempt. Their serried masses, overwhelming superiority of numbers, and bold bearing made the chances of victory to tremble in the balance; my own division, exhausted by seven hours' unremitted fighting, hardly one round per man remaining, and weakened in all things save its unconquerable spirit. Casting about for help, fortunately it was here reported to me that the brigades of Generals Lawton and Early were near by, and, sending to them, they promptly moved to my front at the most opportune moment, and this last charge met the same disastrous fate that had befallen those preceding. Having received an order from General Jackson to endeavor to avoid a general engagement, my commanders of brigades contented themselves with repulsing the enemy and following them up but a few hundred yards.

General McGowan, commanding Gregg's brigade, says of the afternoon's fight:

All the regiments were at this time recalled by an order not to advance, and in so doing bring on a general engagement, but to hold the position and act on the defensive. These dashing charges in advance were entirely successful, and at 12 m. our front was cleared of the enemy, but they soon began to close around us again. It happened that there was an interval of about 125 yards between our right and the left of General Thomas' brigade. Opposite to this interval the railroad cut was very deep, and the enemy, getting into the cut at some point beyond, crawled unobserved down the excavation to a point opposite to this interval and in very heavy force made a sudden rush to enter the gap. The attack from that quarter was unexpected, and for a short time seemed likely to succeed. The assailants succeeded in getting nearly across the point of woods to the field on the northwest, thus for a moment cutting off and isolating our brigade, but it was only for a moment. The Fourteenth

Regiment, South Carolina Volunteers, which at the time was in reserve, was promptly wheeled into the gap, and, assisted by the left regiment of General Thomas' brigade (believed to be the Forty-ninth Georgia) and such parts of our brigade as were near the point, drove them back across the railroad cut with great slaughter. The opposing forces at the time delivered their volleys into each other at the distance of ten paces.

It was now 4 p. m., and there was no abatement in the fury of the assaults, when the brigades of Generals Branch and Early, having been sent to our assistance, came in most opportunely and gallantly. After these reënforcements had arrived and passed to the front, General Gregg collected the remnants of his regiments, and placing them in line behind the troops now engaged, gave them instructions to lie down, and if our friends were overpowered and had to fall back over them, to wait until the enemy was very near, then rise and drive them back at the point of the bayonet. The men all lay down as instructed, resolved as the last resort to try the virtue of the cold steel, but happily the necessity did not arise. The enemy were finally driven back at all points, and night closed upon us occupying the identical spot which we were ordered to hold in the morning.

General Hatch, commanding the First Division U. S. A., thus speaks of the action on the Warrenton turnpike with a part of Longstreet's corps:

Late on the afternoon of the 29th ultimo I was ordered by General McDowell in person (who was at the time stationed near the stone house, on the turnpike from Gainesville road) in pursuit of the enemy, who, he informed me, were retreating. Gibbon's brigade had been detached to support some batteries. With the three other brigades of the division and Gerrish's battery of howitzers, I proceeded with all the speed possible, hoping by harassing the enemy's rear to turn their retreat into a rout.

After marching about three-fourths of a mile, the Second Regiment of the U. S. Sharpshooters was deployed to the front as skirmishers, the column continuing up the road in support. The advance almost immediately became warmly engaged on the left of the road. Two howitzers were then placed in position, one on each side of the road, and Doubleday's brigade was deployed to the front, on the left of the road, and moved up to the support of the skirmishers. We were met by a force consisting of three brigades of infantry, one of which was posted in the woods on the left, parallel to and about an eighth of a mile from the road. The two other brigades were drawn up in line of battle, one on each side of the road. These were in turn supported by a large portion of the rebel forces, esti-

mated by a prisoner, who was taken to the rear, at about 30,000 men, drawn up in successive lines, extending  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the rear. Doubleday's brigade moved to the front under a very heavy fire, which they gallantly sustained; but the firing continuing very heavy, Hatch's brigade, commanded by Colonel Sullivan, was also deployed, and moved to the support of General Doubleday. Patrick's brigade, which had been held in reserve, took up a position on the opposite side of the road, completely commanding it. The struggle, lasting some three-quarters of an hour, was a desperate one, being in many instances a hand-to-hand conflict.

Night had now come on, our loss had been severe, and the enemy occupying a position in the woods on our left which gave them a flank fire upon us, I was forced to give the order to retreat. The retreat was executed in good order, the attempt of the enemy to follow being defeated by a few well directed volleys from Patrick's brigade.

General Doubleday says:

We remained in this position for two or three hours, when an order came for Hatch's and my brigades to attack the enemy's right, it being represented that his whole line was in great confusion, and that it was only necessary for us to move forward to render the rout complete and capture a large number of fugitives. Under this impression we advanced to the attack at the double-quick step, my brigade leading the way, accompanied by Captain Gerrish's battery. As we gained the crest of a hill the battery opened on the enemy, but without much effect, owing to their being well sheltered. I have learned subsequently, from prisoners taken in the action, that we did not encounter Jackson's force at all. It was Longstreet's division, which had just come up, after having been delayed on its route from Thoroughfare Gap by General Ricketts' command. Drawn up in three ranks, the front rank kneeling, the rebels poured in an incessant fire, their line not only confronting ours, but enveloping us on each flank. As their brigades came up, one after another, while we received no reënforcements, the contest soon became very unequal, and after re-forming several times, we were obliged to fall back, the enemy following, until checked by a daring charge of the Harris Light Cavalry, which ended the contest for the night.

## CHAPTER XVI

SECOND MANASSAS. AUGUST 30, 1862

THE 30th of August came in with cloudless sky,—a perfect summer's day. There was but little firing to be heard on either side. Toward the middle of the day the stillness was so strikingly noticeable that many of us, of the rank and file, were convinced that the Federals had fallen back; while our foe's commander, entertaining a similar impression regarding us, was much exercised lest the army under command of General Jackson, not caring for too much attention from him, had escaped and was in full retreat. So fully, indeed, was this idea in possession of his mind, that when 12 o'clock came he issued the following order:

SPECIAL ORDERS, HEADQUARTERS, near Groveton,  
August 30th, 1862.

The following forces will be immediately thrown forward in pursuit of the enemy, and press him vigorously during the day.

Major-General McDowell is assigned to the command of the pursuit. Major-General Porter's corps will push forward on the Warrenton Turnpike followed by the divisions of Brigadier-Generals King and Reynolds.

The division of Brigadier-General Ricketts will pursue the Haymarket road, followed by the corps of Major-General Heintzelman.

The necessary cavalry will be assigned to those columns by Major-General McDowell, to whom regular and frequent reports will be made. The general headquarters will be somewhere on the Warrenton Turnpike.

By command of MAJOR-GENERAL POPE.  
GEO. D. RUGGLES, COL. AND CHIEF OF STAFF.

The illustrious veteran of the saddle, far more skilled in the science of equitation, than conscious of the stamina of the "Stonewall" troops, yielded to the delusion of their flight and speedily began preparations for vigorous pursuit. The day had just passed the meridian when the aforesaid calm was suddenly merged into an ominous reverse, for the rumbling sounds of

artillery in motion came from an unmistakable quarter, followed by volumes of dust,—not to be ascribed to the dragging of brush,—that floated high above the enemy's center. A very little while, and our eagerly strained ears were harshly greeted by the re-echoing boom of a cannon, quickly succeeded by the bursting of a shell over our heads. General Pope was in full pursuit, which, greatly to his surprise, was of short duration, for he found his old enemies, thought to be absconders, in his front and ready to receive him, with all due deference.

Thus was opened the second battle of Manassas, and for long hours the fierce conflict lasted unfalteringly. "The battle was between veterans now and bloody the struggle for victory. The Yankees tried their utmost to wipe out the disgrace of the First Manassas, the Confederates to inflict a severer punishment." Notwithstanding the oft-repeated efforts made to dislodge the "Valley boys" from their strong position in the cut of the old Manassas Gap Railroad, the last, like the first, proved futile. Line upon line of great strength was moved forward against the "Old Stonewall," in a determined endeavor to crush out its very existence by every art of war; but, true to its name, it stood solid and unyielding, beating back every assault. Oh, but the shells did fly,—bursting and spluttering as they came, and dense was the grimy smoke from the powder! Yet, with calmness indescribable, the onslaught of the myriad masses was met. Jackson's center and left were the points of attack,—a most unfortunate selection for the Federal army, since that line of attack may possibly have lost our foes the battle. It is evident that General Pope could not have known that Longstreet's corps had united with Jackson and was then on his left and rear, for during his most sanguine mood that day he announced by telegram to General Halleck that he was going to "bag Jackson this time!"

But all are liable to be mistaken sometimes. The half-mile gap between Jackson's right and Longstreet's left was the key to the situation, owing to its prominence, for that stretch of the battle-field overlooked the front of both the right and left of the Confederate lines.

General Lee upon his arrival the day before had ordered thirty-six pieces of artillery to be planted there in such position as to enflade the enemy attacking either wing of his army, and when these batteries opened, the keynote of the conflict was sounded. In due time, when Jackson's front was unusually hard pressed, and he deemed it necessary to ask for reënforcements,

these guns were brought to bear upon the masses who were forcing back that portion of the lines, and, according to General Longstreet's report, in less than ten minutes the ranks of the enemy were broken and they were retreating in confusion, suffering severely from shell and canister. Thus sufficiently relieved, Jackson's men began in turn to press the foe. General Longstreet, confidently anticipating the order for a general advance, had hurried his whole line forward at a double-quick, and made a grand sweep to the right. Says Lee's report:

Hood's two brigades, closely followed by Evans', led the attack. R. H. Anderson's Division came gallantly to the support of Hood, while the three brigades under Wilcox moved forward on his left, and Kemper on his right. D. R. Jones advanced on the extreme right, and the whole line swept steadily on, driving the enemy with great carnage from each successive position, until ten p. m., when darkness put an end to the battle and the pursuit.

The Federals were completely routed and made their escape by the Stone Bridge and Sudley Ford. They retired under cover of darkness to Centreville, and took possession of the heights around the village. No immediate pursuit was made that night beyond Bull Run, because of the uncertainty of the fords in the obscurity of the night-time. We captured 9,000 prisoners, 20,000 stands of arms, numerous stands of colors, and 30 pieces of artillery. The enemy's loss in killed and wounded was very heavy, ours was not so great.

Of the fighting on the right of our lines General Longstreet says:

About 3:30 o'clock in the afternoon I rode to the front for the purpose of completing arrangements for making a diversion in favor of a flank movement then under contemplation. Just after reaching my front line I received a message for reënforcements for General Jackson, who was said to be severely pressed. From an eminence nearby one portion of the enemy's masses attacking General Jackson were immediately within my view and in easy range of batteries in that position. It gave me an advantage that I had not expected to have, and I made haste to use it. Two batteries were ordered for the purpose, and one placed in position immediately and opened. Just as this fire began I received a message from the commanding general, informing me of General Jackson's condition and his wants. As it was evident that the attack against General Jackson could not be continued ten minutes under the fire of these batteries I made no movement with my troops. Before the second battery could be



placed in position the enemy began to retire, and in less than ten minutes the ranks were broken and that portion of his army put to flight. A fair opportunity was offered me, and the intended diversion was changed into an attack. My whole line was rushed forward at a charge. The troops sprang to their work, and moved forward with all the steadiness and firmness that characterizes war-worn veterans. The batteries, continuing their play upon the confused masses, completed the rout of this portion of the enemy's line, and my attack was therefore made against the forces in my front. The order for the advance had scarcely been given when I received a message from the commanding general anticipating some such emergency, and ordering the move which was going on, at the same time he offered me Major-General Anderson's division. The commanding general soon joined me, and a few moments after Major-General Anderson arrived with his division. The attack was led by Hood's brigades, closely supported by Evans. These were rapidly reënforced by Anderson's division from the rear,—Kemper's three brigades and D. R. Jones' division from the right, and Wilcox's brigade from the left. The brigades of Brigadier-Generals Featherston and Pryor became detached and operated with a portion of General Jackson's command. The attacking columns moved steadily forward, driving the enemy from his different positions as rapidly as he took them. My batteries were thrown forward from point to point, following the movements of the general line. These, however, were somewhat detained by an enfilade fire from a battery on my left. This threw more than its proper share of the fighting upon the infantry, retarded our rapid progress, and enabled the enemy to escape with many of his batteries which should have fallen into our hands. The battle continued until 10 o'clock at night, when utter darkness put a stop to our progress. The enemy made his escape across Bull Run before daylight.

#### Brigadier-General Wilcox reports:

About 3:30 p. m. the enemy's infantry were seen emerging from a wood upon an open field in line of battle, the wood and field being in front of Jackson's extreme right and to the left and near Featherston's brigade, the field about 500 yards wide and terminating 150 yards from Jackson's line, the ground here rising rather steeply for a short distance and then level to the railroad, behind the embankment of which at this point were Jackson's men.<sup>1</sup> Seeing this advance of the enemy, I repaired at once to the interval between Pryor's and Featherston's brigades. From this point was an excellent view of the field and not more than 400 yards distant. The first line of the enemy advanced in fine style across the open field. There

<sup>1</sup> This was the grand charge of Porter's corps.

was but little to oppose them. They were fired upon by our pickets and skirmishers, but they continued to advance, and, ascending the rise before referred to, came within full view of Jackson's line, and were here received with a terrific fire of musketry at short range. They hesitated for an instant, recoiling slightly, and then advanced to near the embankment. Twice did I see this line advance and retire, exposed to a close and deadly fire of musketry. Seeing a second line issuing from the woods upon the field, I was in the act of ordering a battery to be placed in position to fire upon them when a battery was directed by the major-general commanding to fire upon them, this battery being near the turnpike in an excellent and commanding position. The fire of this battery was most opportunely delivered upon this advancing line of the enemy. They were caught in the open field. The effect of every shot could be seen. A rapid fire of shot, shell, and spherical case, delivered with admirable precision, checked their advance. As the shells and spherical case would burst over in front and near them, their ranks would break, hesitate, and scatter. This artillery fire alone broke regiment after regiment and drove them back into the woods.

Seeing these successive lines and regiments of the enemy checked and finally driven back, and yet their front line quite close upon Jackson's line, thus leaving an interval of more than 600 yards between them and the broken retreating lines, I ordered General Featherston to move his brigade by the flank rapidly down the slope in his front, and thus take in rear or intercept the retreat of the enemy that were so closely engaged with Jackson.

At length the front line of the enemy, sadly thinned by the close fire of Jackson's men behind the railroad bank, broke and fell back with great precipitancy and disorder, followed by a portion of Jackson's troops. Featherston now descended the slope in his front and joined in pursuit across the open field. Pryor's brigade was also ordered to follow rapidly. The fleeing enemy, under cover of the woods, endeavored to re-form and to contest the field with us, but our men, inspired by their success, eagerly rushed forward, scarcely halting to deliver their fire.

Maj.-Gen. Franz Sigel, U. S. Army, has the following in his report:

The First Corps took position behind Groveton, on the right of the Gainesville turnpike.

After having taken position as ordered, the corps of Major-General Porter passed between the enemy and our lines and was forming in line of battle on the open field before the First Corps and that of General Reno, masking thereby our whole front. .

Meanwhile General Porter's troops, who had not changed their

position, advanced into the woods where we had lost a thousand men the day before. About this time on our left, where General Reynolds was posted, the musketry and cannonading began to increase. The troops of General Porter had wholly disappeared in the woods, which led me to believe that the enemy had left his position in front, and that it was the intention of General Pope to advance the First Corps on the Gainesville turnpike. Suddenly heavy discharges began in front, the corps of General Porter having met the enemy, who was advantageously posted behind a well-adapted breastwork,—the old Manassas Gap Railroad track. At the same time the enemy opened with shell and solid shot against our center and left wing. Our batteries replied promptly and spiritedly, and from the general appearance of the battle, it was evident that we had the whole army of the enemy before us.

It was now about 5 p. m., when, awaiting the further development of the battle, I received a dispatch through General McDowell, and written by General Porter, expressing his doubt as to the final result of his attack, and requesting General McDowell to “push Sigel forward.” Although I had not received positive orders from General Pope, I immediately made the necessary preparations either to assist General Porter or to resist an attack of the enemy should he repel General Porter and advance against my own position in the center, by directing General Stahel to deploy his brigade in front and General Schurz to form his regiments in a line of reserve. During the execution of these movements General Porter’s troops came out of the woods in pretty good order, bringing a great number of wounded with them. In answer to my question why they were retiring after so short a time, they said that “they were out of ammunition.” Expecting that the enemy would follow up this retrograde movement of a whole corps with a strong force, I kept my troops well together to meet such an event.

Thus we stood when, suddenly, incessant volleys of musketry betrayed the enemy in great force on our left, and showed clearly his real plan of attack.

General McDowell says:

The Sudley Springs Road is nearly north and south, and the Warrenton Turnpike is nearly east and west, crossing each other near where you established your headquarters. I found the enemy had the day before occupied nearly the half of a circle, commencing at a point beyond Bull Run, on the northeast angle made by those roads and sweeping around irregularly through Sudley Springs to the west, and then south to a point in the southwest angle. Our lines opposing them had on the right Heintzelman’s corps; in the center, first Reno’s and then Sigel’s corps, and on the left King’s division

and Bayard's cavalry; Ricketts, in an interior position in reserve. Porter's corps on the day before had been detached and been on the extreme left, up the Warrenton road.

In going with General Heintzelman over to the position held by his troops we found all the points held by the enemy the day before beyond Bull Run abandoned, and in going over to the Sudley Springs Road and west of it we saw no evidences of the enemy in force, some skirmishers and advanced posts or rear-guards, as the case might be, being all that we found. On returning to headquarters and reporting these facts, we found that word had been sent in from the front that the enemy was moving back on the road to Gainesville. Similar word was given by General Patrick. On the supposition that the enemy was falling back, I received your orders to take command of the corps above named and pursue the enemy. I accordingly gave orders that Ricketts' division should report to General Heintzelman, who was to have charge of the right of the advance, and was to move on the enemy by the road from Sudley Springs to Hay Market,—a road running west nearly parallel with the Warrenton Turnpike and on the north side of it,—and placed the other divisions, Reynolds' and King's, which were to the front on the Warrenton Turnpike and near General Porter's corps, under that general, to support him in his advance on that road; but just as these orders were issued, General Reynolds rode up to my headquarters and reported, of his own personal knowledge, that the enemy were not falling back; on the contrary, that he was passing his troops to the south of Warrenton turnpike, and massing them behind the woods, to turn our left and make an attack on the southwest angle of the two roads and thence across the Sudley Springs road to the southeast angles.

Gen. Jno. P. Hatch, whose division advanced with General Porter's corps, occupying the right of the line, says:

The division was drawn up in seven lines, composed as follows: First and second, Hatch's brigade; third and fourth, Patrick's brigade; fifth and sixth, Gibbon's brigade; seventh, Doubleday's brigade; the Second U. S. Sharpshooters being advanced as skirmishers in the woods. At the word given by General Porter the division advanced, with an interval of 50 yards between the lines.

The enemy was very strongly posted behind an old disused railroad embankment, where, according to their own statement, they had been awaiting us for two days. This railroad embankment, which runs parallel to the edge of the woods where we entered in front of our right wing, bears more to the rear on reaching a piece of open ground in front of our left wing.

The contest for the possession of this embankment was most

desperate. The troops on both sides fought with the most determined courage, and I doubt not the conflict at this point was one of the most bloody of the whole war.

As soon as practicable after the battle,—which was about the middle of a night, gloomy and moonless,—various details were gathering the wounded for treatment and burying the dead. The Dead! Solemn, tender memories cluster about us as we turn in retrospect to the noble endurance and daring prowess of our chivalrous veteran dead. In tribute to their valor we may rear the shaft of gray granite, or columns in marble of virgin purity, inscribe on our annals truth's pæans of praise, while heart and head are bowed in reverence,—but as we measure our “foot-prints in the sands of time,” the inscription the pathos of which will ever thrill us with unspeakable emotions runs thus in grand simplicity:

*Fallen in battle and buried on the field.*

According to the report made by our cavalry, who had pushed forward early Sunday morning for the purpose of harassing the enemy's rear, the Federals were already in strong position at Centreville, about three miles east of Bull Run. A part of Longstreet's corps remained upon the battle-field, to keep watch upon the movements of the foe, to attend to the burial of the dead, and to care for the wounded of the enemy, while Jackson's corps, followed by the other portion of our corps, moved on by way of Sudley Ford, intent upon turning the flank of the foe.

The march was not rapid, in consequence of heavy rains and the much exhausted condition of the men. However, we reached the Little River turnpike by Sunday afternoon, and moved forward in the direction of Fairfax Court House on the following morning, the first day of September.

## CHAPTER XVII

THE FIGHT NEAR CHANTILLY. SEPTEMBER 1, 1862

UPON arriving at a point known as Ox Hill Road, which is about one and a half miles west of Germantown, a strong force was encountered, which had been thrown out to cover the enemy's flank in its retreat toward Washington.

The position of the enemy was on the right (south) side of the turnpike, and consisted of Reno's, Stevens', and Kearny's divisions, supported by other troops. General Jackson formed his lines on the south side of the turnpike facing the enemy, with Hill on the right, Lawton (Ewell's division) in the center, and Starke (Jackson's division) on the left. The formation and advance were made during a severe thunderstorm,—the rain coming down in torrents directly in the faces of our men.

The artillery was placed in the positions on the eminence on the north side of the turnpike, and the brigades of General Branch and Field were pushed forward to feel the enemy. They had not proceeded far before they came in contact with the head of the Federal forces, and a severe engagement took place. Though the men of these brigades fought gallantly, the flank of Branch was struck by a severe fire, which caused him to give way and fall back; but the lines were soon righted, although they had suffered severe loss. These troops were reënforced by the brigades of Gregg, Thomas, and Pender; a part of Ewell's brigade also went in, and the conflict became general. The Federals fought with fury and determination until darkness put an end to the desperate contest waged. The arts of man and the fiery elements vied with each other in making this battle one of terror and alarm. The enemy held their ground stubbornly, though one of their divisions, commanded by General Stevens,—who was killed,—was badly used up and fell back in great confusion. General Kearny, a man noted for his bravery, in attempting to rally the troops and get them to charge upon our lines, was killed near our front, his body falling into our hands. The darkness

put an end to the fight, leaving the lines facing each other and not far apart. During the night the enemy withdrew, leaving the field in our possession.

Of this battle Gen. A. P. Hill thus speaks:

This battle commenced under the most unfavorable circumstances,—a heavy, blinding rainstorm directly in the faces of my men. These two brigades gallantly engaged the enemy, Branch being exposed to a very heavy fire in front and on the flank. Gregg, Pender, Thomas, and Archer were successively thrown in. The enemy obstinately contested the ground, and it was not until the Federal Generals Kearny and Stevens had fallen in front of Thomas' brigade that they were driven from the ground. They did not, however, retire until later during the night, when they entirely disappeared. The brunt of the fight was borne by Branch, Gregg, and Pender.

General Lane, of Branch's brigade, says:

This brigade pressed eagerly forward, through an open field and a piece of woods, to the edge of another field, where we were for a short time exposed to the enemy's infantry fire without being able to return it. An attempt was made to flank us on the right, and the Eighteenth Regiment was immediately detached from the center of the brigade to prevent the movement, which it did, sustaining a deadly fire unsupported. The enemy's direct advance was through a field of corn, in which he sustained great loss, notwithstanding most of our guns fired badly on account of the heavy rain which fell during the engagement. On learning that our ammunition was nearly out, General Branch made known the fact, and was ordered to hold his position at the point of the bayonet. We remained where we were until dark, when the whole command fell back to the field in rear of the woods. The Twenty-eighth, cold, wet, and hungry, was ordered back to the field of battle to do picket duty for the night without fires. This engagement is regarded by this brigade as one of our severest. The enemy's infantry used a great many explosive balls.

General Birney, U. S. Army, reports as follows:

Under orders from Major-General Kearny I reported my brigade to General Reno, and was ordered by him to the front. On reaching that point I found the division of General Stevens retiring in some disorder before the enemy, the officers in command of regiments stating that their ammunition had been exhausted. I immediately ordered forward the Fourth Maine Regiment, and it gallantly advanced, and was thrown in active conflict. I successively

took forward the One Hundred and First New York, Third Maine, Fortieth and First New York. These regiments held the enemy, and sustained unflinchingly the most murderous fire from a superior force.

At this juncture General Kearny reached the field with Randolph's battery, and, placing it in position, aided my brigade by a well-directed fire. I pointed out to the General a gap on my right, caused by the retiring of Stevens' division, and asked for Berry's brigade to fill it. He rode from me to examine the ground, and dashing past our lines into those of the enemy, fell a victim to his own gallant daring. I sent forward the Thirty-eighth New York and Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania to complete our victory. They advanced gallantly, and night closed in, leaving my brigade in full possession of that portion of the battle-field in which we were engaged. General Kearny not returning, and supposing that he had been taken prisoner, I assumed command of the division, and ordering forward Robinson's and Barry's brigades, relieved my tired regiments, and until 3 o'clock a. m., September 2, remained on the battle ground, at which time I followed with the division the corps of General Reno to Fairfax Court House.

General Heintzelman says:

At 5:50 firing commenced by General Reno on the enemy between the Little River and Warrenton turnpikes. The enemy were within half a mile of the latter when they attacked him. A portion of General Reno's troops gave way, but General Burney's brigade, of General Kearny's division, gallantly supported them. General Kearny rode forward alone to reconnoiter in his usual gallant, not to say reckless, manner, and came upon a rebel regiment. In attempting to escape he was killed. The country has to mourn one of her most gallant defenders.

It will never be known in this age what the entire losses of the contending forces were, as the reports are incomplete, but the following figures are given, being taken from the "War Records":

Federal,—From Aug. 16 to Sept. 2, 1862,—aggregate 14,462.  
Confederate,— " " " " " " 7,244.

As the Confederates captured about 7,000 unwounded prisoners, it looks a little queer, if nothing else, that the enemy's aggregate losses are reported at only 14,462. By the reports of the Federal officers it will be found that the Federal army had lost somewhere in the neighborhood of 40,000 men in the seventeen days' campaign. If 25,000 of these were skulkers and strag-



glers,—as some Northern generals claim,—the army must have been in a deplorable condition. The probability is that Pope's losses were considerably over 20,000 men.

The portion of Longstreet's corps that had followed Jackson on Sunday morning crossed the run at Sudley Ford and went into bivouac for the night on the opposite bank. Our breakfast that morning consisted of raw beef sliced off by us as we hurriedly passed the smoking carcasses that had been slaughtered by the enemy a little while previous to our arrival. The rations issued to us that night at Sudley were two crackers (hard-tack) and about a quarter of a pound of bacon to each man.

The march was continued on Monday. As we drew near Chantilly we were overtaken by a heavy thunderstorm, and every man's clothing was thoroughly soaked by the rain. We need not expatiate upon the status of our appetites, as we have already furnished our bill of fare for the last meals of which we had partaken; and we now comforted ourselves with the hope of soon being overtaken by the wagons, as this was apparently, to our minds, about as desirable as anything that could possibly happen. Late in the afternoon we arrived in the neighborhood of the battle-field above referred to and commenced speedy preparations for the comfortable enjoyment of the night, kindling good fires by which to dry our clothing. As no rations were visible, the tired, draggled, hungry veterans were about to retire to rest upon the soft luxuriant meadow grass, over which we had already spread our blankets, when a summons was received by our brigade (Kemper's) to move to the front.

With alacrity the men obeyed the order, and in little time had penetrated a large body of woods on our right, marching single file, left in front.

The night was not dusky,—it was dismally black,—as we moved, wetter than enough without, dryer than enough within, each man's hand on the cartridge-box of the one preceding him.

The pickets having been posted from the rear, after moving for what seemed to be an interminable length of time the right of the line halted, under orders to be in readiness to repel an attack, and to preserve the utmost quietude. The reserve was then placed in position to act in concert with the main picket line in case of an attack. Our opponents were sufficiently near for us to hear distinctly what they were saying. Thus we remained all night,—some assuming one position, some another, as was most

comfortable,—without fires, without food, and without sleep. As the daylight began to peep through the rain-beaten leaves (and truly a most welcome visitor it was to the anxious hearts of the watchers!), imagine how great was the astonishment of all of the reserve when they discovered their position to be between their own lines and those of the Federals, and that they were facing their own men. This was owing to an error on the part of the guide, occasioned, no doubt, by the intense darkness of the night, which had resulted in our taking as a reserve post the outside, instead of the inside of our picket lines. Without waste of time the change of front to rear was effected, and as the enemy had changed to quarters further off during the night, we built large fires, and were soon luxuriating in the comfort afforded by them. We had refreshment also, furnished by chewing the substance from sassafras twigs; and as this was the only available breakfast to be found thereabout, we thus regaled ourselves for about an hour. Returning to the meadow in which the fires had been vainly kindled on the evening previous, we were greeted on all sides by the unwelcome tidings: "The wagons haven't come." So we raised our "flies" and sought forgetfulness in slumber.

In the afternoon a wagon-load of provisions,—a token of kind thoughtfulness to the members of Company C, Seventeenth Virginia,—arrived from the ladies of their native place, the good old town of Leesburg.

Oh,—the unloading of that wagon! What feelings beggaring description it created! Bread, hams, cakes, pickles, and a long list of other delicious edibles were never recognized with more yearning attention. All thoughts of the forty-eight hours' fast, broken only by raw beef, green corn (when obtainable), sassafras twigs, and sprigs of clover, were swallowed up in this grand pageant. Well aware of our condition and that their supply was sufficient to gladden each heart and properly tone each stomach, Company C, with a generosity well in keeping with its noble spirit, was not long in extending in its genial way to the Regiment a whole-souled invitation to partake with them of their luscious feast. A repetition of their courteous invitation was rendered unnecessary by the promptest kind of an acceptance. There were no laggards,—no critics; all were in harmony. And such a feast as we had! Who can, or would, forget it? It makes an old soldier's mouth water even now, after all these years, whenever he recalls it, insignificant as it may seem to the rising generation. Six days without bread and then,—a royal banquet!

Who wonders that we can review it and enjoy it, at each review, as one of the happiest social eras in our soldier life?

Taken as a whole, the results of the fighting from the Rapidan to the Ox Hill Road (through a period of eleven days) had proved brilliant victories for the Confederate arms. The losses were very great to each army, it is true, but it stands for the South as a campaign of success, for which there is, in truth, no parallel. The success that attended the different moves upon the chessboard in the game between the Army of Virginia and the Army of Northern Virginia was attributable in a high degree to the keen perception of our great head, Gen. Robert E. Lee. Possessing not only a thorough knowledge of the country about and of the movements of his own forces, but also supplied with a system of espionage adopted by a number of trustworthy scouts to which was added the indispensably valuable services of the cavalry,—he was advised of his opponent's every movement. There would be no exaggeration in making the assertion that in that campaign Gen. John Pope knew less of the movements of the Federal army of which he was commander, than did General Lee. Besides this, his Lieutenants Jackson and Longstreet, and the dashing General J. E. B. Stuart, most faithfully executed his orders, striking the enemy at the proper moment and at the most vulnerable points such heavy blows as staggered him temporarily almost beyond recovery.

Comrades of the gray,—you whose tattered garments, swollen limbs, and bleeding feet gave sure evidence of your participation in that soul-trying campaign,—does not heart respond to heart as memory unfolds her record of those stirring scenes? Those battle-scarred comrades laid so many years gone beneath the green sod of old Virginia's cannon-torn bosom will stand no more on earth's arena; the soul-thrilling echo of that wonderful yell with which they rushed upon the foe, regardless of physical suffering from the scorching heat of the August day's sun, is hushed, but we—the living remnant—can still remember the storm, and storm-cradled though these memories be they are rich in tributes to those by-gone times: Laurels from the heart's conservatory, moist with the dew of feeling.

## CHAPTER XVIII

MARYLAND! MY MARYLAND! SEPTEMBER 5-8, 1862

ON Wednesday, September 3, the army was again on the move. The infantry, artillery, and cavalry, with the long trains of army wagons, started on their first trip to penetrate the enemy's country; their route being toward the Potomac River, and thence northward.

On the second of September, Gen. George B. McClellan was placed in command of the fortifications about Washington and of all the troops for the defense of the capital, and every precautionary step necessary to carry out the orders intrusted to him was immediately taken. When, therefore, the information was received by him that General Lee was moving up the south bank of the Potomac he began the advance of his several corps on the north bank, his left resting on the river, while his right was extended to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

Jackson's corps, with D. H. Hill's division in the van, had marched off in the direction of Leesburg; our corps had followed and striking the Leesburg Turnpike some miles south of the town, we there passed the night of the fourth. The inhabitants of that section of Virginia had long felt the pressure of the invader's iron heel, and, as may be supposed, the presence of the Southern army was the occasion of great rejoicing, and welcomes were most heartily given,—many persons throwing open their doors and distributing with princely hospitality the entire contents of their larders. All were glad, so far as we know.

Awakened on the morning of the fifth by the bright sunbeams, the writer lay wrapped in his blanket in an open field not far from a cozy farmhouse; and the first object that met his eye was the form of the farmer standing above him, a friendly being who, with smiling face, repeated this refreshingly cordial invitation:

"Come to breakfast!"

The words sounded strangely bewildering, so long a time had elapsed since such a welcome had been heard, and a little while

passed before its full meaning was realized. But the welcome that beamed in the face of the kind-hearted host brought conviction at once, and rising I sped without delay to the hospitable house. Ah, insensible indeed would have been the olfactories that were not regaled, upon crossing that threshold, by the aroma of the steaming coffee! General Longstreet and staff were already there, and after taking an appetizer,—consisting in a good pull from the mouth of a long-necked black bottle of something reported to be thirty years old (it was certainly strong enough to have been in its prime),—the next move was to breakfast, of the enjoyment of which it is needless to give assurance. Suffice it to say that all the partakers were charmed, and before leaving were unanimous in pronouncing that home the best place to rendezvous in Loudon County.

At this time General Lee's army was in poor condition for campaigning in an enemy's country, as the major portion of his men were ragged and in every way ill provided for. The meagre diet gathered as they marched, and upon which they had necessarily to live for so many days, had greatly diminished their physical proportions, and altogether they presented anything but a prepossessing appearance,—the name "tatterdemalions" right well describing their outer man. But notwithstanding their ragged garments, lacerated feet, and eyes bloodshot from the effects of dust and wind, not one atom of their fearlessness and determination had abated; and they stood ready and eager to cross the river, and plant the standard of the Southern Confederacy upon the shores of "Maryland! My Maryland!" many of whose sons had eluded the vigilance and iron grasp of the foe and were with our army, bravely performing their part in both cavalry and infantry service. By battle, disease, and straggling (the latter caused by bare feet and rapid marching) the numerical strength of our army had been greatly depleted. Just before crossing the Potomac General Lee issued an order forbidding all bare-footed men from accompanying their commands. The sum total of our effective men, then, did not exceed 45,000, and these, firm in the conviction of right, felt themselves invincible.

One of the principal purposes of this invasion was to afford to those Marylanders detained against their will an opportunity to rally and unite themselves with the South. But of this there will be further mention hereafter.

The army commenced crossing the river at the several fords on the 5th, and on the afternoon of the following day all were on

the northern banks of the stream. As this was their first experience in crossing the borders of the enemy's territory, General Lee issued strict orders for the protection of private property. So far as the destruction of grain and fruit was concerned, it would have been an impossibility to have prevented the men from helping themselves whenever an opportunity presented itself. Virginia had been stripped of everything available for the sustenance of both armies, and so our men could not be prevented from foraging now that fresh fields presented themselves. General Lee established his headquarters in the town of Frederick, having seized the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and all other roads leading into Washington, Baltimore, Harper's Ferry, and the upper Potomac.<sup>1</sup>

The following proclamation was issued by General Lee :

HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VA.,  
Near Frederick Town, 8th Sept., 1862.

TO THE PEOPLE OF MARYLAND :

It is right that you should know the purpose that has brought the army under my command within the limits of your State, so far as that purpose concerns yourselves.

The people of the Confederate States have long watched with the deepest sympathy the wrongs and outrages that have been inflicted upon the citizens of a Commonwealth allied to the States of the South by the strongest social, political, and commercial ties.

They have seen with profound indignation their sister State deprived of every right, and reduced to the condition of a conquered province.

Under the pretence of supporting the Constitution, but in violation of its most valuable provisions, your citizens have been arrested and imprisoned upon no charge and contrary to all forms of law ; the faithful and manly protest against this outrage made by the venerable and illustrious Marylander, to whom in better days no citizen appealed for right in vain, was treated with scorn and contempt ; the government of your chief city has been usurped by armed strangers ; your legislature has been dissolved by the unlawful arrest of its members ; freedom of the press and of speech has been suppressed ; words have been declared offences by an arbitrary decree of the Federal executive, and citizens ordered to be tried by a military commission for what they may dare to speak.

Believing that the people of Maryland possessed a spirit too lofty to submit to such a government, the people of the South have long

<sup>1</sup> Western Maryland, like Western Virginia, adhered strongly to the Federal Government ; those in sympathy with us were closely watched and promptly reported.

wished to aid you in throwing off this foreign yoke; to enable you again to enjoy the inalienable rights of freemen and restore independence and sovereignty to your State.

In obedience to this wish, our army has come among you, and is prepared to assist you with the power of its arms in regaining the rights of which you have been despoiled.

This, Citizens of Maryland, is our mission, so far as you are concerned.

No constraint upon your free will is intended; no intimidation will be allowed.

Within the limits of this army, at least, Marylanders shall once more enjoy their ancient freedom of thought and speech.

We know no enemies among you, and will protect all, of every opinion.

It is for you to decide your destiny, freely and without constraint.

This army will respect your choice, whatever it may be; and, while the Southern people will rejoice to welcome you to your natural position among them, they will only welcome you when you come of your own free will.

R. E. LEE,  
General Commanding.

## CHAPTER XIX

FALL OF HARPER'S FERRY. CRAMPTON'S GAP. BOONESBORO'  
SEPTEMBER 14, 1862

GENERAL LEE'S proclamation to the people of Maryland was not productive of the result anticipated: the addition of new recruits to his army.

While at Frederick, our commander was informed that Harper's Ferry was still in the occupancy of a strong force of the enemy, which was to him a matter of no little surprise, as he had naturally supposed that the news of our advance into Maryland would occasion the abandonment of this point. Realizing at once that he could not permit a point so strongly fortified to remain as a post for the Federals,—a point directly in his line of communications,—he decided to take it. For this purpose General Jackson was instructed to move his corps on the morning of the 10th to Martinsburg, disperse the enemy at that place, then move on to Harper's Ferry, and execute such plans as were necessary for its capture. The divisions of McLaws and Anderson were marched at the same time to Maryland Heights, and instructed to seize that important position and coöperate with Jackson in capturing Harper's Ferry. Walker's division recrossed the Potomac with the intention of occupying Loudon Heights. These movements were all accomplished with remarkable promptness.

The location of the town of Harper's Ferry is peculiar. It occupies an angle made by the junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers as they pass through the gorge in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Across the Potomac to the north rise the Maryland Heights, across the Shenandoah to the south are the Loudon Heights, while the town itself is built upon a range of highlands between the two rivers, which are known as Bolivar Heights. Maryland Heights overlook and command the other prominent points, and are within easy musket range of the town itself, which, lying as it does at the bottom of a funnel-shaped opening, is completely at the mercy of troops in possession of the heights commanding it.



The rapidity and precision with which these different movements were effected for the capture of the town and its large garrison of soldiers were wonderful. General Jackson, with three divisions,—A. P. Hill's, Jackson's and Ewell's,—on September 11 crossed the Potomac at Light's Ford, above and west of Harper's Ferry, and so distributed his forces as to shut off all outlet for the escape of the Federals in that direction. A. P. Hill's division was sent to Martinsburg, while Jackson, with the remainder of his command, took up the line of march to North Mountain Depot, his purpose being to circumvent the escape of the enemy at Martinsburg. At the approach of the Confederates the town was deserted by the Federals, who fell back upon Harper's Ferry; our troops entered on the 12th and were soon in possession of the large quantity of valuable stores and munitions of war which had thus been abandoned.

General Jackson was once more in his own military district, where the patriotic portion of the inhabitants, especially the women, were most enthusiastic in their manifestations of delight at seeing him once more among them. They crowded about to offer their affectionate greetings, to shake him by the hand, and in every way possible give expression to their pleasure, until the good man was so embarrassed by their homage that he exclaimed:

"Really, ladies, this is the first time I was ever surrounded by the enemy!"

He eventually disengaged himself and entered upon his duties.

On the 13th of September Jackson hurried toward Harper's Ferry, which he approached from the west. On the afternoon of that day the divisions of McLaws and Anderson were in possession of Maryland Heights,—after a feeble resistance on the part of the enemy,—while General Walker had secured position on Loudon Heights. After placing himself in communication with his subordinates, on the morning of the 14th General Jackson proceeded to arrange the final disposition of his troops and guns in order to secure the speedy capture of the town. Cannons had been moved with great difficulty by hand and carefully mounted in position on the crest of Loudon Heights, where they were properly supported by the infantry. McLaws had been engaged throughout the night of the 13th and the early portion of the following day in constructing a road along the crest of Elk Ridge, a part of the Maryland Heights, over which guns might be carried to points bearing upon the town. Early in the afternoon of

the 14th four guns were placed in position commanding both the town and the enemy's works on Bolivar Heights. The infantry were so skilfully disposed of by the commander, that the place was securely invested and no loophole for escape left unoccupied by his faithful troops.

After a brief combat, which engaged three brigades of Hill's division, a high point on the extreme right of the enemy's line,—a point from which an enfilading fire could be poured into the foe,—was seized and occupied; several batteries, notwithstanding the intense exertion required, were posted upon that spot, and the trap by which the Federal commander had inadvertently permitted himself and his comrades to be encompassed was in all its parts ready to be sprung.

On the evening of the 14th the guns of McLaws and Walker had given some warm hints to the Federal encampment as a sort of foretaste of what was prepared for them. When the morning of the 15th dawned, the guns on the Confederate side were opened simultaneously upon the beleaguered town and the works of the enemy about the peaks of Bolivar Heights. There was about an hour's storm of shot and shell, after which our infantry advanced, and then the enemy's guns were silenced.

Hill, who occupied the right of Jackson's line, was under orders to advance his infantry to the attack as soon as this anticipated moment arrived, and he was just on the forward move, when, by the flashes of light through the volume of smoke, a white flag was observed waving from a point within the lines of the foe. Immediately the advance was stayed; the guns ceased their roar; General Hill entered the town; the capitulation took place about 9 o'clock a. m., and the garrison surrendered at discretion.

The results from this capitulation were about 11,000 prisoners, 73 pieces of artillery, 13,000 stands of small arms, and quite a number of wagons and horses. There were also large accumulations of military stores, which came into our possession. General Jackson, lacking both time and men to enable him to send the captured prisoners to the interior, paroled them all,—officers and privates,—assisting the former in the removal of their personal effects to their own lines. It was a capture of magnificent proportions, but our great "Stonewall" was too judicious in utilizing the precious time to waste it at this juncture of affairs in husbanding the spoils, knowing that the situation of a part of Longstreet's corps, with the army of General McClellan on their

front, was urgent; so, leaving the captured town, with all that had been acquired thereabout, in charge of Gen. A. P. Hill's division, he hurried the remainder of his forces forward to unite with the army under General Lee, at Sharpsburg.

General Lee in the meantime, accompanied by General Longstreet with two divisions of his corps,—those of Hood and Jones,—had left Frederick en route to Hagerstown, and had reached there in the afternoon of the 12th. As the troops were passing through the small place known as Middletown (and very pronounced, rumor said, in its feeling against the Confederates), several ladies appeared on the street, wearing conspicuously cockades of red-white-and-blue ribbon. As they approached, one of our men stepped up to them, and very politely touching his hat, remarked: "If you will take the advice of a fool, you will return into the house and take off those colors; some fool may come along and insult you."

The advice had its effect, as the ladies immediately withdrew.

The division of D. H. Hill, about 5,000 strong, had been left at South Mountain, under instructions to hold the passes at all hazard.

General McClellan reached Frederick on the 12th, and accidentally came into possession of the following order, which had been issued by General Lee for the different movements of his army:

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,  
September 9th, 1862.

SPECIAL ORDERS 191.

The army will resume its march to-morrow, taking the Hagerstown road. General Jackson's command will form the advance, and after passing Middletown, with such portion as he may select, will take the route toward Sharpsburg, cross the Potomac at the most convenient point, and by Friday night take possession of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, capture such of the enemy as may be at Martinsburg, and intercept such as may attempt to escape from Harper's Ferry.

General Longstreet's command will pursue the same road as far as Boonesboro', where it will halt with the reserve, supply and baggage trains of the army.

General McLaws, with his own division and that of General R. H. Anderson, will follow General Longstreet. On reaching Middletown, he will take the route to Harper's Ferry, and by Friday morning possess himself of the Maryland Heights, and endeavor to capture the enemy at Harper's Ferry and vicinity.

General Walker, with his own division, after accomplishing the object in which he is now engaged, will cross the Potomac at Cheek's Ford, ascend its right bank to Lovettsville, take possession of Loudon Heights, if practicable, by Friday morning, Key's Ford on his left, and the road between the end of the mountain and the Potomac on his right. He will, as far as practicable, coöperate with General McLaws and General Jackson, in intercepting the retreat of the enemy.

General D. H. Hill's division will form the rear guard of the army, pursuing the road taken by the main body. The reserve artillery, ordnance, and supply trains, &c., will precede General Hill.

General Stuart will detach a squadron of cavalry to accompany the commands of Generals Longstreet, Jackson, and McLaws, and with the main body of the cavalry will cover the route of the army, and bring up all stragglers that may have been left behind.

The commands of Generals Jackson, McLaws, and Walker, after accomplishing the objects for which they have been detached, will join the main body of the army at Boonesboro', or Hagerstown.

Each regiment on the march will habitually carry its axes in the regimental ordnance wagons, for use of the men at their encampments to procure wood, &c.

BY COMMAND OF GENERAL R. E. LEE,  
R. H. CHILTON, A. A. General.

A revelation such as this to General McClellan, at this particular time, might have wrought the destruction of the greater part of General Lee's forces, could the vastly superior numbers of the Federal general's army have been handled with skilful rapidity. The position of our troops on the following day (Sept. 13) stood thus: D. H. Hill, with one division, was at South Mountain; Longstreet, with two divisions, was at Hagerstown, 13 miles distant, while Jackson, with the residue of the army,—seven divisions,—was advancing upon Harper's Ferry, from 7 to 10 miles away.

It was on the night of the 13th that information was received by our commander that the forces of the enemy, 90,000 strong, had arrived at the foot of South Mountain. There was a Confederate force of but 5,000 men between McClellan's myriads and the troops operating against Harper's Ferry, and of this McClellan was aware. He must, very naturally, have been much elated at the prospect of speedily opening communication with that town. We may suppose, too, on the other hand that the announcement of the proximity of the opposing army would have given rise in General Lee's mind to some degree of doubt as to

the issue. If such were the case, however, he gave no evidence,—by look, word, or action,—that might indicate any uncertainty. He at once ordered General Longstreet to move back with his two divisions, in order to give support to Hill at South Mountain; and this march was made without delay on the morning of the 14th. The South Pass was held by General Hill's right, while the Central or Boonesboro' Pass was held by his left, and the pass on the extreme left was watched by a small body of cavalry.

Early on the 14th, which was Sunday, the enemy moved forward to the attack, with the idea of cutting our army in two and vanquishing us in detail. He had surely a grand opportunity for a thorough accomplishment of his plan; but large bodies are said in philosophy to move slowly, and his proved too large for the emergency and so,—those plans were not carried out. This will appear further on.

While the Seventeenth Virginia Regiment was moving to this battle-field, the sad intelligence reached them of the fall of General Garland,—formerly Colonel of the Eleventh Virginia,—a man loved and honored by the entire brigade for his gentle courtesy and noble bearing. The Seventeenth and the Eleventh had been on the most friendly terms since their first encampment at Manassas, and had fought side by side on every battle-field. Brothers in arms, they felt themselves brothers in heart, and the fortunes of each were watched with interest and guarded by the other. Their blood had been mingled in many a hard-fought battle, their tears had blended o'er many a loved one's grave. They sorrowed now, as with one heart, for the brave Commander who had been friend and comrade to each. In the conservatory of each heart the myrtle and cypress, enwreathing his memory, will entwine as long as life shall last.

On the 14th there were two battles fought, one at Crampton's Gap, on the road from Burkettsville to Harper's Ferry, and the other at Turner's, or Boonesboro' Gap, about five miles to the north.

Crampton's Gap is the key to the position held at that time at Harper's Ferry. It is located about five miles in the rear of Maryland Heights, with Pleasant Valley lying between. It was held by Colonel Mumford of the Second Virginia, with his own and the Twelfth Virginia Cavalry, supported by two small regiments of Mahone's brigade of infantry. While the battle was in progress they were reinforced by the other two regiments of the same brigade. Orders were issued to General Franklin's corps,

of the Federal army, about 14,000 strong, to force the passage of the Gap, and relieve the garrison at Harper's Ferry; and about noon on Sunday (Sept. 14), this force reached the front of our picket line near the eastern base of the mountain, and deploying them, a division on each side of the road leading to the pass, they began the ascent. As they moved forward, their skirmishers in front, two pieces of artillery stationed upon the crest opened upon them with marked effect. Our pickets were driven in, and when our line of battle, which occupied a position behind a stone fence, was reached, our men poured a very destructive fire upon them.

For three long hours this comparative handful of men adhered to their post and repulsed every attempt to drive them from it. The reinforcements, which had been so repeatedly sent for, at last arrived; but not until the day was too nearly spent for them to render the necessary support,—when, indeed, our men had been forced back by vastly superior numbers, and were retiring down the west slope of the mountain, followed by the enemy. Finally they came to a stand, and the advance of the pursuers was checked. Had Franklin promptly and thoroughly availed himself of his advantages that night, the plans by which the Confederates gained possession of Harper's Ferry would have been entirely thwarted; instead, however, his troops went into bivouac and thus awaited for further action the coming of daylight. When, however, the morning arrived and his corps had been massed in Pleasant Valley, it was too late to render any assistance to the beleaguered garrison. McLaws had withdrawn a portion of his men from Maryland Heights and placed them in position to resist any further advance of Franklin's corps. But it seems that in this instance it required but the sight of a Confederate line of battle to furnish ample excuse to this Federal Commander for not advancing.<sup>1</sup> McLaws' force, of less than two small divisions, having been much depleted by battle, sickness, and consequent straggling, it was necessary to make it appear fully double the numbers of the entire corps under General Franklin's command. That this was successfully accomplished may be readily inferred from General Franklin's dispatch to General McClellan, which runs as follows:

Sept. 15, 11 a. m.

GENERAL,—

I have received your dispatch by Capt. O'Keefe. The enemy is

<sup>1</sup> It may be he was sorry for us!

in large force in my front, in two lines of battle stretching across the valley, and a large column of artillery and infantry on the right of the valley, looking toward Harper's Ferry. They outnumber me two to one. It of course will not answer to pursue the enemy under these circumstances. I shall communicate with Burnside as soon as possible. In the meantime I shall wait here, until I learn what is the prospect of reënforcements. I have not the force to justify an attack on the forces I see in front. I have had a very clear view of it, and its position is very strong.

Respectfully,

W B. FRANKLIN, Major-General.

MAJ.-GEN. G. B. McCLELLAN, Commanding.

Not long after General McLaws had moved to the front of General Franklin the garrison at Harper's Ferry capitulated. This furnished an easy route for the Confederates to withdraw, of which opportunity McLaws, without loss of time, took advantage, recrossing the river at Harper's Ferry, and marching by way of Shepherdstown to unite his forces with those of General Lee, at Sharpsburg.

While the soldiers under Franklin were hammering so steadily at the entrance of Crampton's Gap, General McClellan had forwarded heavy columns of infantry, with several batteries of artillery, to assault Hill's position at the Central and Southeast passes. These were hours of hard fighting, in which, it may justly be said, Hill's veterans excelled themselves as usual, repulsing each attack. Early in the afternoon Longstreet's two divisions appeared upon the scene.

The pass on the left was held by a small force of cavalry, and this being the direction in which the Federal troops were moving,—having relinquished their efforts to carry Hill's position,—Hood's division was deployed to receive them, while General Rodes' men were posted on the side of the mountain overlooking the pass.

These provisions had not been arranged very long, when General Rodes' force was attacked fiercely and with great pertinacity. These assaults were successfully met until nightfall, when, unable to contend longer against such immense numerical odds, our men gave way and thus the Federals gained possession of this point and the command of Central Pass, from which our troops were forced to fall back.

The darkness of the nightfall rendered the withdrawal an easy one, and so, before the middle of the following day we were

all in line at Sharpsburg. From General Longstreet's official report we copy the following extract :

We succeeded in repulsing the repeated and powerful attacks of the enemy, and in holding our position till night put an end to the battle. It was short but fierce. Some of our most gallant officers and men fell in this struggle, among them the brave Colonel J. B. Strange, of the Nineteenth Virginia Regiment.

Gen. D. H. Hill, whose division bore the brunt of the bloody contest, thus speaks of the result :

We retreated that night to Sharpsburg, having accomplished all that was required,—the delay of the Yankee army until Harper's Ferry could not be relieved.

Should the truth ever be known, the battle of South Mountain, as far as my division was concerned, will be regarded as one of the most remarkable and creditable of the war. The division had marched all the way from Richmond, and the straggling had been enormous in consequence of heavy marches, deficient commissariat, want of shoes, and inefficient officers. Owing to these combined causes, the division numbered less than 5,000 men the morning of September 14, and had five roads to guard, extending over a space of as many miles. This small force successfully resisted, without support, for eight hours, the whole Yankee army, and, when its supports were beaten, still held the roads, so that our retreat was effected without the loss of a gun, a wagon, or an ambulance. .

Had Longstreet's division been with mine at daylight in the morning, the Yankees would have been disastrously repulsed ; but they had gained important positions before the arrival of reënforcements. These additional troops came up, after a long, hurried and exhausting march, to defend localities of which they were ignorant, and to fight a foe flushed with partial success, and already holding key-points to further advance. Had our forces never been separated, the battle of Sharpsburg never would have been fought, and the Yankees would not have even the shadow of consolation for the loss of Harper's Ferry.



## CHAPTER XX

SHARPSBURG, OR ANTIETAM. SEPTEMBER 17, 1862

**W**HEN the battle of Boonesboro' ended, our men returned to where their baggage had been left, and rested until all the wounded had been brought in from the field and cared for. The line of march was then formed, and regardless of weariness to men or horses, they trudged along through the entire night, when a halt was called for breakfast; this disposed of, the column proceeded, and reaching the vicinity of Sharpsburg, were soon again in position. These battles were battles of necessity on the part of the Confederates, in order to hold McClellan in check until the fall of Harper's Ferry, after which General Lee, with three divisions and the army trains, had retired upon Sharpsburg.

General Jackson's six divisions were hurried forward, and a very strong line of defense was assigned the army for its occupation. General McClellan speaks of the position General Lee had chosen in these terms:

The bridge over the Antietam, described as No. 3, near this point was strongly covered by riflemen protected by rifle-pits, stone fences &c., and enfiladed by artillery. The ground in front of this line consisted of undulating hills, their crests in turn commanded by others in their rear. On all favorable points the enemy's artillery was posted, and their reserves, hidden from view by the hills on which their line of battle was formed, could maneuver unobserved by our army, and from the shortness of their line, could rapidly reënforce any point threatened by our attack. Their position stretching across the angle formed by the Potomac and Antietam, their flanks and rear protected by these streams, was one of the strongest to be found in this region of country, which is well adapted to defensive warfare.

Longstreet's troops occupied the right and center, supported by the division of D. H. Hill, while the left was held by Jackson, and Stuart's cavalry.

When the morning of the 16th arrived, it found our men

ready for the struggle, for notwithstanding the great disparity in numbers, the Confederates had an abiding confidence in their commanders, in each other, and in themselves; and they awaited the advance of the enemy with the determination to maintain the strength of this feeling by the intrepidity of their conduct.

The sun had shown itself but a little while that morning when the enemy's shells commenced their salutation, our batteries slowly responding. As midday approached, a battery of eight pieces, on the left, opened fire, and then a most terrific artillery duel ensued. Situated as our batteries were in front of Sharpsburg, the shots designed for us from the enemy's guns passed over our heads, and bursting, fell into the town, causing injury to many houses as well as much suffering.

In order to ascertain our exact position, late in the afternoon two corps of the enemy's troops crossed the creek in front of Longstreet's left, thus bringing on quite a heavy contest of both artillery and infantry, after which they soon retired. The Confederate soldiers rested upon their arms, firm in the conviction that the morrow would award them another victory. The aggregate number of troops who thus confronted each other in readiness for deadly encounter is estimated at about 130,000, i. e.: Federals 90,000; Confederates 40,000.

When the morning of the 17th dawned, the preliminary artillery duel commenced, the enemy's guns opening first and directing their heaviest fire against our left, in front of Jackson. A large force of the Federals, composed of the corps of Hooker and Mansfield, supported by that of Sumner, having massed on the left of our lines, began to press forward, and very soon the left and left-center were engaged in a violent encounter. Our antagonists fought bravely, and being in superior numbers, gradually forced back the men of Jackson.

For hours the conflict raged. The thunder of the artillery was equalled by the roar of the musketry, and both proclaimed the deadly nature of the conflict. General Lee speaks of the battle at this point in these terms:

The troops advanced with great spirit, and the enemy's lines were repeatedly broken and forced to retire. Fresh troops, however, soon replaced those that were beaten, and Jackson's men were in turn compelled to fall back. The brave General Stark was killed, General Lawton was wounded, and nearly all the field officers, with a large proportion of the men, killed or disabled. Our

troops slowly yielded to overwhelming numbers and fell back, obstinately disputing the progress of the enemy.

The battle now raged with great violence, the small commands under Hood and Early holding their ground against many times their own numbers of the enemy, and under a tremendous fire of artillery. Hood was reënforced by the brigade of Ripley.

The enemy's lines were broken and forced back, but fresh numbers advanced to their support, and they began to gain ground. The desperate resistance they encountered, however, delayed their progress until the troops of General McLaws arrived and those of General Walker could be brought from the right. Hood's brigade, greatly diminished in numbers, withdrew to replenish their ammunition, their supply being entirely exhausted. They were relieved by Walker's command, who immediately attacked the enemy vigorously, driving him back with great slaughter. Colonel Manning, commanding Walker's brigade, pursued until he was stopped by a strong force, behind which was posted a large force of infantry with several batteries.

Upon the arrival of the reënforcements under General McLaws, General Early attacked with great resolution the large force opposed to him. McLaws advanced at the same time, and the enemy were driven back in confusion, closely followed by our troops beyond the position occupied at the beginning of the engagement. The enemy renewed the assault on our left several times, but was repulsed with loss. He finally ceased to advance his infantry, and for several hours kept up a furious fire from his numerous batteries, under which our troops held their position with great coolness and courage.

General Longstreet says :

During the night the enemy threw his forces across the Antietam in front of Hood's position, and renewed his attack at daylight the next morning. Hood was not strong enough to resist the masses thrown against him. Several of Major-General D. H. Hill's brigades reënforced the position; but even with these, our forces seemed but a handful when compared with the hosts thrown against us. The commands engaged the enemy, however, with great courage and determination, and, retiring very slowly, delayed him until the forces of Generals Jackson and Walker came to our relief. D. R. Jones' brigade, under Colonel G. T. Anderson, came up about the same moment; and soon after this the divisions of Major-Generals McLaws and R. H. Anderson. Col. S. D. Lee's reserve artillery was with General Hood, and took a distinguished part in the attack on the evening of the 16th, and in delaying that of the 17th. General Jackson soon moved off to our left for the purpose of turn-

ing the enemy's right flank, and the other divisions, except Walker's, were distributed at other points of the line. As these movements were made, the enemy again threw forward his masses against my left. This attack was met by Walker's division, two pieces of Captain Miller's battery, of the Washington Artillery, and two pieces of Captain Boyce's battery, and was driven back in some confusion. An effort was made to pursue, but our line was too weak. Colonel Cook, of the Twenty-seventh North Carolina, very gallantly charged with his own regiment, but, his supply of ammunition being exhausted and he being unsupported, he was obliged to return to his original position in the line. From this moment our center was extremely weak, being defended by but part of Walker's division and four pieces of artillery, Cooke's regiment, of the division, being without a cartridge. In this condition, again the enemy's masses moved forward against us. Cooke stood with his empty guns, and waved his colors to show that his troops were in position. The artillery played upon their ranks with canister. Their lines began to hesitate, soon halted, and after an hour and a half retired. Another attack was quickly made a little to the right of the last. Captain Miller, turning his pieces upon the lines and playing upon them with round shot over the heads of R. H. Anderson's men, checked the advance, and Anderson's division, with the artillery, held the enemy in check until night.

General Jackson says :

Colonel Grigsby, with his small command, kept in check the advance of the enemy on the left flank, while General Early attacked with great vigor and gallantry the column on his right and front. The force in front was giving way under this attack, when another heavy column of Federal troops were seen moving across the plateau on his left flank. By this time the expected reinforcements (consisting of Semmes' and Anderson's brigades and part of Barksdale's, of McLaws' division) arrived, and the whole, including Grigsby's command, now united, charged upon the enemy, checking his advance, then driving him back with great slaughter entirely from and beyond the wood, and gaining possession of our original position. No further advance, beyond demonstrations, was made by the enemy on the left.

Descriptive of the contest on our left we give extracts from General McClellan's report. He says :

At daylight the contest was renewed between Hooker and the enemy in his front. Hooker's attack was successful for a time, but masses of the enemy, thrown upon this corps, checked it. Mansfield brought up his corps to Hooker's support, when the two corps

drove the enemy back, the gallant and distinguished veteran Mansfield losing his life in the effort. General Hooker was, unhappily, about this time wounded and compelled to leave the field, where his services had been conspicuous and important. About an hour after this time, Sumner's corps, consisting of Sedgwick's, Richardson's and French's divisions, arrived on the field,—Richardson's some time after the other two, as he was unable to start as soon as they. Sedgwick, on the right, penetrated the woods in front of Hooker's and Mansfield's troops. French and Richardson were placed to the left of Sedgwick, thus attacking the enemy toward their left center. Crawford's and Sedgwick's line, however, yielded to a destructive fire of the masses of the enemy in the woods, and suffering greatly (Generals Sedgwick and Crawford being among the wounded), their troops fell back in disorder; they nevertheless rallied in the woods. The enemy's advance was, however, entirely checked by the destructive fire of our artillery. Franklin, who had been directed the day before to join the main army with two divisions, arrived on the field from Brownsville about an hour after, and Smith's division replaced Sedgwick's and Crawford's line. Advancing steadily, it swept over the ground just lost, but now permanently retaken. The divisions of French and Richardson maintained, with considerable loss, the exposed positions which they had so gallantly gained, among the wounded being General Richardson.

The condition of things on the right toward the middle of the afternoon, notwithstanding the success wrested from the enemy by the stubborn bravery of the troops, was at this time unpromising. Sumner's, Hooker's and Mansfield's had lost heavily, several general officers having been carried from the field. I was at one time compelled to draw two brigades from Porter's corps (the reserve) to strengthen the right.

Brig.-Gen. A. Doubleday, commanding First Division, Hooker's corps, says:

These united agencies drove the enemy back, saved the guns, and gave us a renewed possession of the cornfield. General Patrick now pushed his regiments up to the road, which he held firmly for some time, capturing two battle-flags from the rebel regiments which advanced against him. He was finally attacked both on his right flank and rear, and compelled to fall back. He withdrew to a line of rocks at right angles to the general direction of the strip of woods, and about 15 rods from them. There he remained waiting for ammunition and reinforcements to be sent him.

General Williams, of Mansfield's corps, now came up with reinforcements. He sent a regiment at my request to watch the rebel force that supported the enfilading battery which was acting against

the right of Patrick's line. The other regiments that he brought up with him were notified of the nature of the ground and of the position of the enemy, and were instructed by General Patrick as to the position they ought to assume to enfilade the enemy's line and drive him from his strong position, near Dunker Church, which seemed to be the key of the battle-field. The reinforcements sent us did not attack in the right place, and they were soon swept away by a terrible fire against their left and front from an enemy behind the rocks they could not see. Their line gave way, and the main body of the rebels advanced. We had no troops left to stem the shock. My own command had been fighting since daylight, and being out of ammunition was obliged to fall back. Patrick's brigade covered our retreat, resisting the enemy gallantly and retiring in perfect order. Campbell's battery having lost 38 men in killed and wounded, including its commander among the latter, and having had 28 horses killed, was no longer in a condition for active service, and it was compelled to retire behind the supports of Sedgwick's division. It was soon followed by Gibbon's and Phelps' brigades, exhausted as they were by long continued fighting, nearly out of ammunition, and too few in numbers to keep back the overpowering forces that were advancing.

Brigadier-General Patrick says:

The whole force now in the wood moved forward, when its advance was suddenly checked by a terrific fire on the left and front. As before, the lines of our troops were broken and thrown into confusion. All were retiring rapidly before the enemy along the same line as in the preceding engagement, and I once more threw my brigade under the ledge, partly to rally the retiring troops and partly to hold our remaining cartridges until order could be restored. But few of the troops rallied, however, and after holding my command here until the enemy were close upon our right flank, the brigade was withdrawn in an unbroken line to the wood on the other side of the road, and took position to arrest the flight of stragglers.

The following is from Major-General Sumner's report:

My First Division (Sedgwick's) went into battle in three lines. After his first line had opened fire for some time, the enemy made a most determined rush to turn our left, and so far succeeded as to break through the line between Banks's corps and my own until they began to appear in our rear. In order to repel this attack from the rear, I immediately faced Sedgwick's third line about, but the fire at that moment became so severe from the left flank that this line moved off in a body to the right, in spite of all the efforts that could

be made to stop it. The first and second lines after some time followed this movement, but the whole division was promptly rallied, took a strong position, and maintained it to the close of the battle.

While the battle on the left and left-center was under full headway advances were made upon a part of Longstreet's division upon the center and right center, which, though weak in numbers, fought with its usual gallantry, and repulsed numerous attempted assaults of the enemy. The enemy's artillery kept up a terrific fire throughout the day.

The grand assault of the day was made on our extreme right and at the stone bridge known as No. 3, situated about one mile southeast of Sharpsburg on the Pleasant Valley Road, at the crossing of the Antietam. The attack was made by General Burnside's corps, said to number 20,000 men. This position (on our extreme right) was held by a portion of the small brigade, commanded by General Toombs, numbering less than five hundred men; and most gallantly did they protect the approaches to the bridge, resisting repeated attempts of the foe to force a passage. It was not until they had effected a crossing at a ford below that Toombs' brave men were forced to yield their position. Slowly they fell back, as the enemy pushed forward his forces over the bridge and formed his lines below the bluffs.

We subjoin extracts from the various reports of general officers taken from the "War Records," which furnish a graphic picture of the battle at this point.

General Lee says:

While the attack on the center and left was in progress, the enemy made repeated efforts to force the passage of the bridge over the Antietam, opposite the right wing of General Longstreet, commanded by Brig.-Gen. D. R. Jones. This bridge was defended by General Toombs, with two regiments of his brigade (the Second and Twentieth Georgia) and the batteries of General Jones. General Toombs' small command repulsed five different assaults made by a greatly superior force, and maintained its position with distinguished gallantry.

In the afternoon the enemy began to extend his line as if to cross the Antietam below the bridge; at 4 p. m., Toombs' regiment retired from the position they had so bravely held. The enemy immediately crossed the bridge in large numbers and advanced against General Jones, who held the crest with less than 2,000 men. After a determined and brave resistance, he was forced to give way, and the enemy gained the summit.

General A. P. Hill had arrived from Harper's Ferry, having left that place at 7:30 a. m. He was now ordered to reënforce General Jones, and moved to his support with the brigades of Archer, Branch, Gregg, and Pender, the last of whom was placed on the right of the line, and the other three advanced and attacked the enemy, now flushed with success. Hill's batteries were thrown forward and united their fire with those of General Jones, and one of D. H. Hill's also opened with good effect from the left of the Boonesboro' road. The progress of the enemy was immediately arrested and his lines began to waver. At this moment General Jones ordered Toombs to charge the flank, while Archer, supported by Branch and Gregg, moved upon the front of the Federal line. The enemy made a brief resistance, then broke and retreated in confusion toward the Antietam, pursued by the troops of Hill and Jones, until he reached the protection of his batteries on the opposite side of the river. In this attack the brave and lamented Brig.-Gen. L. O. Branch was killed, gallantly leading his brigade.

The repulse on the right ended the engagement, and, after a protracted and sanguinary conflict, every effort of the enemy to dislodge us from our position had been defeated with severe loss.

General Longstreet says:

This attack was followed by the final assault, about 4 p. m., when the enemy crossed the bridge in front of Sharpsburg and made his desperate attack upon my right. Brigadier-General Toombs held the bridge and defended it most gallantly, driving back repeated attacks, and only yielded it after the forces brought against him became overwhelming and threatened his flank and rear. The enemy was then met by Brig.-Gen. D. R. Jones with six brigades. He drove back our right several times, and was himself made to retire several times badly crippled, but his strong reënforcements finally enabled him to drive in my right and occupy this part of my ground. Thus advanced, the enemy's line was placed in such a position as to enable General Toombs to move his brigade directly against his flank. General Jones seized the opportunity and threw Toombs down against the enemy's flank, drove him back, and recovered our lost ground. Two of the brigades of Maj.-Gen. A. P. Hill's division advanced against the enemy's front as General Toombs made his flank attack. The display of this force was of great value, and it assisted us in holding our position. The enemy took shelter behind a stone wall, and another line was advanced to the crest of a hill in support of his first line. Captains Richardson's, Brown's, and Moody's batteries were placed in position to play upon the second line, and both lines were eventually driven back by these batteries. Before it was entirely dark the 100,000 men that had been



threatening our destruction for twelve hours had melted away into a few stragglers. The battle over, orders were sent around for ammunition-chests and cartridge-boxes to be refilled.

Gen. D. R. Jones says:

My command took possession of the heights in front of and to the right of the town, being the extreme right of our whole line. I ordered General Toombs to defend the bridge over the Antietam Creek in front of me with the Second and Twelfth Georgia Regiments, reënforced by half a company from Jenkins' brigade. These reënforcements took but small part in what ensued from the nature of their position.

The battle raged with intensity on the left and center, but the heavy masses in my front,—repulsed again and again in their attempts to force the passage of the bridge by the two regiments before named, comprising 403 men, assisted by artillery I had placed in position on the heights,—were unable to effect a crossing, and maneuvered as if about to cross below at some of the numerous fords. My command had been further reduced on the right by detaching Garnett's brigade to the front of the town, leaving me, for the defense on the right, with only Toombs' two regiments, Kemper's, Drayton's, and Walker's brigades.

When it was known that on that morning my entire command of six brigades comprised only 2,430 men, the enormous disparity of force with which I contended can be seen.

About this time the two regiments of Toombs' brigade (Seventeenth and Fifteenth Georgia), which had been left behind, accompanied by five companies of the Eleventh Georgia Regiment, Anderson's brigade, came upon the field, and were at once placed at General Toombs' disposal, to aid in the defense of the bridge, my force before having been too weak to aid him with a single man. Before, however, they could be made available for that purpose, the gallant Second and Twentieth, having repulsed five separate assaults and exhausted their last round of ammunition, fell back, leaving the bridge to the enemy. Meanwhile General A. P. Hill had come up on my right and was effecting a junction with my line, several of his batteries already in position assisting mine in firing on the enemy now swarming over the bridge. Undeterred, except momentarily, by this force, the enemy advanced in enormous masses to the assault of the heights. Sweeping up to the crest, they were mowed down by Brown's battery, the heroic commander of which had been wounded but a few moments before. They overcame the tough resistance offered by the feeble forces opposed to them, and gained the heights, capturing McIntosh's battery, of General Hill's command. Kemper and Drayton were driven back through the town. The Fifteenth South Carolina, Colonel De Saussure, fell

back very slowly and in order, forming the nucleus on which the brigade rallied. Jenkins' brigade held its own, and from their position in the orchard poured a destructive fire on the enemy. General Toombs, whom I had sent for, arriving from the right with a portion of his brigade and part of the Eleventh Georgia Regiment, was ordered to charge the enemy. This he did most gallantly, supported by Archer's brigade, of Hill's command, delivering fire at less than 50 yards, dashing at the enemy with the bayonet, forcing him from the crest, and following him down the hill. McIntosh's battery was retaken, and, assisted by other pieces, which were now brought up to the edge of the crest, a terrific fire was opened on the lines of the enemy between the slope and the creek, which, finally breaking them, caused a confused retreat to the bridge. Night had now come on, putting an end to the conflict, and leaving my command in the possession of the ground we had held in the morning, with the exception of the mere bridge.

General McClellan says in his report of the battle :

As the command was driving the enemy to the main heights on the left of the town, the light division of General A. P. Hill arrived upon the field of battle from Harper's Ferry, and with a heavy artillery fire, made a strong attack on the extreme left. To meet this attack, the left division diverged from the line of march intended, and opened a gap between it and the right. To fill up this, it was necessary to order the troops from the second line. During these movements, General Rodman was mortally wounded. Colonel Harland's brigade, of General Rodman's division, was driven back. Colonel Scamon's brigade, by a change of front to rear on his right flank, saved the left from being driven completely in. The fresh troops of the enemy pouring in, and the accumulation of artillery against this command, destroyed all hope of its being able to accomplish anything more.

General Burnside says :

At 10 o'clock I received an order from the general commanding to make the attack. I directed Colonel Kingsbury, of the Eleventh Connecticut, to move forward with his line of skirmishers, and directed General Cox to detail General Crook's brigade to make the assault. General Rodman was directed to cross over at the ford below the bridge, and join on to the left of the command, which was to be thrown over the bridge. From General Crook's position it was found to be almost impossible to carry the bridge, and General Sturgis was ordered to make a detail from his division for that purpose. He immediately sent forward the Second Maryland (Lieut-

tenant-Colonel Duryea) and the Sixth New Hampshire (Colonel Griffin), which regiments made several successive attacks in the most gallant style, but were driven back by the galling fire of the enemy.

General Sturgis, by a judicious posting of these two regiments in rear of a spur which fronted the bridge, succeeded in protecting them from the enemy's fire until they reached the crest of the spur, at which point they commenced their charge and carried the bridge at the point of the bayonet at about 1 o'clock, the whole division following immediately

Our loss at this place was fearful, the enemy being posted in rifle-pits and behind barricades, within easy musket range of our men, and almost entirely concealed and covered from our shots. We lost at this point some of our most valuable officers.

It being apparent that the enemy was strongly reënforced, and that we could not be reënforced, the command was ordered to fall back to the crest above the bridge, which movement was performed in the most perfect order under cover of the batteries on the height, the same formation being adopted that was made before the attack.

The battle from right to left was one of the most desperate that, at that period of the war, had been fought; many gallant men, including a large number of general officers from both armies, lay stretched on the field in that deep sleep from which "no sound could awake them to battle again."

Ten general officers of the Federals were killed and wounded. General McClellan on the 18th, in view of the situation, deemed it inadvisable to hazard another assault. Of his reasons for this opinion, the author quotes from his report as follows:

Whether to renew the attack on the 18th, or to defer it, even with the risk of the enemy's retirement, was the question before me. After a night of anxious deliberation, and a full and careful survey of the situation and condition of our army, the strength and position of the enemy, I concluded that the success of an attack on the 18th was not certain.

At that moment,—Virginia lost, Washington menaced, Maryland invaded,—the National cause could afford no risks of defeat.

One division of Sumner's, and all of Hooker's corps, on the right, had, after fighting valiantly for several hours, been overpowered by numbers, driven back in great disorder, and much scattered; so that they were for the time somewhat demoralized. In Hooker's corps, according to the return made by General Meade, commanding, there were but 6,729 men present on the 18th, whereas on the morning of the 22nd there were 13,093 men present for duty

in the same corps, showing that previous to and during the battle 6,364 men were separated from their command.

General Longstreet sums up the victory to the Confederate arms in these words:

Before it was entirely dark, the hundred thousand men that had been threatening our destruction for twelve hours, had melted away into a few stragglers.

The name of every officer, non-commissioned officer and private, who had shared in the toils and privations of this campaign, should be mentioned. In one month, these troops had marched over two hundred miles, upon little more than half rations, and fought nine battles and skirmishes, killed, wounded and captured nearly as many men as we had in our ranks, besides taking arms and other munitions of war in large quantities. I would that I could do justice to all of these gallant officers and men in this report.

It will be seen from a close perusal of the accounts and reports just closed that the advantages of the Maryland campaign were largely in favor of the Confederates. Though the invasion of Maryland, for the purpose of enlisting the people of that State in the South's cause, was a complete failure, in all other respects the advance was a success, and therefore a victory to our arms.

The battles of Crampton's Gap and Boonesboro',—or South Mountain,—were conflicts of necessity, as the passes had to be held until the fall of Harper's Ferry. This was accomplished with much gallantry on the part of the Confederates, having to fight, as they did, at great odds. The capture of that town, with its stores of immense value, including a large number of guns and small arms, was a grand victory. Viewed in connection with the battles above named the advantages were all on our side.

The battle of Sharpsburg was fought openly and fairly. When it opened, only a portion of the Confederate forces was present; the other part was on forced marches for the field, and some of the brigades did not reach the ground until late in the day. The majority of the men went into battle wearied down from rapid marches, and were not in condition to fight very valiantly. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the attacks of the enemy were boldly, bravely, and successfully met. The lines, with slight exception, were firmly held, and the losses inflicted upon the enemy were far heavier than those borne by the men acting on the defensive. The morale of two entire corps,—Hooker's and Mansfield's,—and one division,—Sedgwick's of

Sumner's corps,—was snapped asunder, and the component parts scattered to the four winds of heaven. Such was the effect of the terrible beating given the Army of the Potomac that it required months to recuperate its strength before being in condition to make another advance.

Our army remained in position all of the 18th of September, and were prepared for a renewal of the conflict; but General Lee, getting information which led him to believe that the enemy were receiving large reënforcements, very wisely decided to wait no longer. During that night orders were issued, and the army passed to the rear, crossed the Potomac, and by 10 o'clock a. m., of the 19th, were safely on the south side of the river.

#### CASUALTIES

The following figures are taken from the "War Records," and embrace the aggregate losses sustained during the Maryland Campaign,—September 12 to September 20, inclusive. On the Confederate side the losses are grouped. Surgeon L. Guild, Medical Director Army of Northern Virginia, reports the aggregate killed and wounded at 10,291.

The combined reports of General Longstreet and Jackson give 9,946 as the total loss.

The following is believed to be a fair estimate of the Confederate losses.

Surg. L. Guild's report of killed and wounded.	10,291
Longstreet's report of missing	1,310
Jackson's report of missing.	57
Estimate of cavalry loss. . .	157
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Total Confederate loss. . .	11,808
Federal losses as reported . . . .	27,994
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Aggregated losses of both armies.	39,802

#### THE FORCES ENGAGED

General McClellan gives the number of his army at the battle of Antietam, present and fit for duty, as 87,164; adding to these

figures the losses and straggling at Crampton's Gap and South Mountain, we have the aggregate of his forces,—90,000 men.

The Confederate army was not over 40,000 strong when it crossed the Potomac; from this number must be deducted the losses and straggling at the battles of Crampton's Gap and South Mountain. Many of our men were without shoes, and the straggling was excessive. Indeed, the number of troops engaged in the battle of Antietam could not have been over 35,000.

Gen. D. H. Hill in his report says:

The battle was fought with less than 30,000 men. Had all our stragglers been up, McClellan's army would have been completely crushed or annihilated. Doubtless the want of shoes, the want of food, and physical exhaustion had kept many brave men from being with the army.

## CHAPTER XXI

SCENES AND INCIDENTS. SEPTEMBER—NOVEMBER, 1862

**D**OUBTLESS it has been,—and reasonably, too,—the occasion of surprise and wonder to the reader who has mentally followed through these pages, or other accounts, the hardships and trials of the Confederate soldiers, that, with numbers so far in the minority, they could have achieved so many victories. Sharpsburg was one of the points of contest where the “boys in gray”—or, rather, what had once been gray,—fought against more than double their numbers.

It is an unquestionable fact that the Seventeenth Virginia Infantry, whose muster roll numbered more than eight hundred, carried into that battle but fifty-six men, rank and file. Death, disabling wounds, sickness, and lack of shoes to cover their naked feet had thus reduced the number of men. It had been marching and fighting, fighting and marching, for one long month, with but nominal rest and slim rations, and when the roll was called after this last-mentioned battle only fourteen men answered to their names: the major, one lieutenant, and twelve privates; forty-two having been either killed, wounded, or missing in the engagement. Many other regiments were reduced in like proportion; indeed, that may truthfully be said of the whole army. Of those wounded was our brave old colonel, Montgomery D. Corse, who was subsequently promoted for his gallantry on many a blood-stained field to the rank of brigadier-general.

As he was incapacitated to retire with the fragment left of his regiment, the fourteen were forced to leave him in the hands of our enemies. Lying helpless and suffering from the effects of his wounds, he was surrounded by a squad of them; one (an importation, let us hope, from without the pale of civilization), after inquiring of him if he was wounded, and receiving an affirmative response, deliberately prepared to shoot him, cocking his gun and examining its cap to convince himself it would not miss fire. Fortunately, the movement was observed and understood by another, not of his ilk, who indignantly drove the cow-

ardly ruffian away, with strong epithets of angry contempt, and assured the colonel of full protection as a prisoner of war. General Corse has often spoken of this and always as a remarkable act of noble humanity; and the soldier, who remained unknown to him, held a warm and grateful spot in his memory ever after. As soon as practicable our lines advanced, and driving the enemy from that section of the field, most gladly relieved the colonel from his awkward position.

While the starry heavens were aglow with the rapid transit of screeching shrapnel and the fiery illumination of bursting shells from the enemy's batteries opposite Sharpsburg, four men from the Seventeenth Virginia were detailed, about midnight on the 16th, and ordered to the rear to prepare rations for their hungry comrades. Traveling two miles to the wagon-train of the commissary, they secured flour, and returning to Sharpsburg, endeavored to borrow a few cooking utensils for bread baking and so on; for, the regimental wagons, with these luxuries aboard, having taken a wrong road, left the cooks dependent upon merciful chance. As the majority of families had fled from town, it was a difficult matter to obtain anything to supply the culinary deficiencies. It was daylight when they met to begin operations, and in summing up the results of their success, they found themselves furnished with one skillet and an old oven out of which one half the bottom had disappeared. But, like genuine soldiers, they had no idea of permitting any obstacles that could be overcome to deprive their half-famished comrades in front of as good a breakfast as circumstances would allow them to prepare. So, with a will they went to work, but hardly had they succeeded in getting one batch of dough ready for the bake when the guns of the Federals opened again, and the ugly, discomfiting shells fell about them at such rate as to necessitate a change of base. Within ten yards of them, and just in front of their fire, two shells burst; two more struck the building behind which they had established their kitchen, and a fifth, penetrating the building, set it on fire by bursting inside.

Undaunted, however, by this state of affairs, they removed for safety to a cellar, supposing that in this refuge they would be free from stoppages of that sort; but this delusion was quickly dispelled as a shell appeared in their midst, having passed through two floors, and, fortunately, buried itself in the floor of the cellar without bursting, otherwise it would have proved their last baking day. Out of the dark recesses of this underground



cuisine and into daylight they sped until the firing of the foe had ceased, and they resumed their work.

At about four o'clock in the afternoon, only sixteen hours after the preparation of the meal had been ordered, this much-longed-for breakfast was carried to the almost famishing boys in line of battle. Just after the return of the aforesaid detail to Sharpsburg for the purpose of cleaning up the dishes, washing the skillet, and cleaning the battered old oven, the battle opened fiercely along the lines. The report of the captain of the squad closes as follows: "The cooks were now ordered to retreat out of town, which they did in good order, but making very good time."

On the morning of the 19th, after our portion of the army had crossed the Potomac, a very amusing occurrence took place. Our brigade having received orders to follow that commanded by Drayton, somehow, in the prevailing darkness and the confusion that ensued from the fording, completely lost sight of it, and in hurrying forward to overtake it we had to pass through a ravine in front of us, which was only wide enough to admit one regiment, four abreast, at a time. At the entrance, pushing on from another direction, we met the Fifth North Carolina, and as it was an impossibility for both to enter, our commander at once explained to the major of the Fifth, that we were under orders to follow Drayton and had to do so, to which from some misapprehension of the circumstances, our friend from the good old State,—as deservedly renowned for its patriotism as for its tar and turpentine,—paid not the slightest attention, but ordered his men forward. The Seventeenth Virginia led the van, and our major, without further hesitation, gave the order:

"Forward, Seventeenth!"

In the mouth of the ravine the heads of the two columns met, and such a scene as was enacted it would puzzle the most graphic pen to attempt to describe.

"Forward, Seventeenth!" "Forward, Fifth!" were repeated again and again, and from the Eleventh Virginia in the rear came the shouts, "Forward, men! follow the old Seventeenth, and don't let them get between you!"

Soon the boys of the Fifth were jammed against the rugged sides of the steep rocky pass, while many clambered up the hillside and clung to whatever would hold them as we passed triumphantly through. As may be supposed, the victory was proclaimed with a shout and the summons "Come along, Fifth" was

wafted back to the ears of the good fellows, whom we had necessarily to treat with such inhospitality.

That no special effort had been made on the part of our enemies to detain us on the Maryland shore may be attributed to the fact that they had been so badly cut to pieces and were so thoroughly demoralized as to be out of condition to follow closely and obstruct our way. This is the copy of a telegram, on the 22nd, to the General-in-Chief from General McClellan:

As soon as the exigencies of the service will admit of it, this army should be reorganized. It is absolutely necessary to secure its efficiency, that the old skeleton regiments should be filled up at once, and officers appointed to supply the numerous existing vacancies. There are instances where captains are commanding regiments, and companies are without a single commissioned officer.

Our divisions had all gone into camp. General Stuart, in command of his cavalry, had been sent to recross the river at Williamsport, as a menace to the enemy's right and to harass him in his movements. General Pendleton, with his thirty pieces of reserve artillery, located on the heights overlooking the river, and the remnant of a brigade of infantry, vigilantly watched the crossing at Sheperdstown.

On the afternoon of the 19th, the Federals began the work of putting their batteries in position, in order to protect their troops while crossing in pursuit. Porter's corps soon put in an appearance on the opposite bank, but the cannonading that began soon after did very little damage, though after nightfall a strong force of our antagonists effected a crossing above where General Pendleton had his position, and advancing stealthily, secured a point so near the base of the heights as to be quite out of the range of our artillery. The infantry support was so shattered, so reduced in numbers by previous battles, that, without their accustomed commanders, they were panic-stricken and fled. Thus were the guns of Pendleton exposed to capture, but owing to the prompt action of the officers belonging to the batteries, twenty-six pieces were withdrawn, and four were left for the enemy, who lost no time in seizing them.

Pendleton immediately reported this uncomfortable state of affairs to Jackson, adding what he believed to be true: That all his guns had been captured. This was about midnight. General Jackson acted with his usual judicious self-possession. The divisions of Generals A. P. Hill, Early, and D. H. Hill were

promptly ordered under arms and instructed to move without delay. Longstreet in the meanwhile was to march his troops to the support of Jackson.

The Federals had planted a large number of guns upon the opposite hills, thereby to cover the advance movement of their infantry, which had been drawn up in considerable numbers in line of battle on the hills adjacent to the river. Jackson superintended in person the disposal of the Confederate troops. A. P. Hill formed his gallant "Light Brigade" in double line, and advanced steadily upon the foe. The storm of shot raining from the opposite hills was unproductive of the intended effect upon that grand charge, made, as it seemed, at the very throats of our enemies, and pressing firmly against them while Hill's second line, marching by the flank, emerged in full view of the Blues, and uniting themselves with the first line, they swept forward *en masse*, with such power as to drive their uncongenial neighbors from the elevated position they had attained to the river banks below. Disregarding the heavy fire kept up by the artillery, our men rushed upon them and forced them with unrelentless fury into the river, where numbers were drowned, and many were shot. Their loss was 363, while ours was reported as 8.

General McClellan, in his account of this fight, says:

This detachment crossed the river, and advanced about a mile, when it was attacked by a large body of the enemy lying in ambush in the woods, and driven back across the river with considerable loss. This reconnoissance showed that the enemy was still in force on the Virginia bank of the Potomac, prepared to resist our further advance.

This was a severe shock to the Federal commander, and the memory of it seemed to linger long as a lesson that taught him the inexpediency of getting too near the Confederate rear-guard. After Hill had dismissed the last of the enemy from his presence, he moved his men back a short distance and watched the ford throughout the remainder of the day,—September 20.

While the men composing General Lee's army were resting and luxuriating among the good things found in such profusion throughout that beautiful portion of the valley that lies between Bunker Hill and Winchester, recruiting the strength so exhausted by many days of rapid marching and hard fighting, their numbers increasing from the incoming of stragglers and of those who had been absent on sick leave, the Federals were not idle, but

most actively engaged in reorganizing, equipping, and drilling their myriads, preparatory to making another entrance into the war-beaten paths of our own old Commonwealth.

General Lee's address to his soldiers, which was issued a short time after the army returned into Virginia, runs thus:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,

October 2, 1862.

In reviewing the achievements of the army during the present campaign, the commanding general cannot withhold the expression of his admiration of the indomitable courage it has displayed in battle and its cheerful endurance of privation and hardships on the march.

Since your great victories around Richmond you have defeated the enemy at Cedar Mountain, expelled him from the Rappahannock, and after a conflict of three days utterly repulsed him on the plains of Manassas and forced him to take shelter within the fortifications around his capital. Without halting for repose, you crossed the Potomac, stormed the heights of Harper's Ferry, made prisoners of more than 11,600 men, and captured upward of seventy pieces of artillery, all their small arms, and other munitions of war. While one corps of the army was thus engaged the other insured its success by arresting at Boonsboro' the combined armies of the enemy, advancing under their favorite general to the relief of their beleaguered comrades.

On the field of Sharpsburg, with less than one-third his numbers, you resisted from daylight until dark the whole army of the enemy, and repulsed every attack along his entire front of more than four miles in extent.

The whole of the following day you stood prepared to resume the conflict on the same ground, and retired next morning without molestation across the Potomac.

Two attempts subsequently made by the enemy to follow you across the river have resulted in his complete discomfiture and his being driven back with loss. Achievements such as these demanded much valor and patriotism. History records few examples of greater fortitude and endurance than this army has exhibited, and I am commissioned by the President to thank you in the name of the Confederate States for the undying fame you have won for their arms.

Much as you have done, much more remains to be accomplished. The enemy again threatens us with invasion, and to your tried valor and patriotism the country looks with confidence for deliverance and safety. Your past exploits give assurance that this confidence is not misplaced.

R. E. LEE,

General Commanding.

Those few weeks of inactivity passed in the delightful valley, so abundant in its extra good rations for both man and beast, soon restored the bloom of health to the cheeks of Johnnie Reb, imparting to him strength and activity in place of exhaustion and contraction of muscle. Glad smiles brightened the exchange of greeting, hearty laughter once more reverberated through the length and breadth of the camps, as jokes passed from one to another, or each bantered his comrades, as some ludicrous incident—or scene that transpired perhaps during the solemn hour of battle, or on the long, foot-sore marches,—arose before the mind's eye in its most humorous phase.

'Tis true that many a familiar face and well-known form were missed from among the various messes; some were resting "free from all pain" beneath the sod, or the sand, of old Virginia; some, after the heat and burden of the day, were laid in dreamless sleep along the sunny slopes of the mountains on the northern shore, while thousands languished upon beds of suffering in the hospitals on both sides of the river. These were sorrowful realities, and as such the Confederate soldiers accepted them, but did not permit them to become causes for either depression or discouragement. Turning to the blessings surrounding them in their pleasant encampments, their ample and good fare, and the bright, beautiful autumn weather so re-invigorated the body and inspired the heart in those memorable days, that happiness and mirth abode with us. It is a noteworthy fact that one of the men of our regiment (Seventeenth Virginia) has been known to entertain for hours a score or more of his companions, from his fund of wit and anecdote, keeping his listeners on the *qui vive* to avoid losing any of his merry hits. After these treats of merriment, it required days sometimes before the risibles could be suppressed into seriousness. One of the peculiarities of our mirth-inspiring comrade was the rare one, of not repeating. "Chestnut" in his vocabulary was a word uncoined.

During the interval of quiet which prevailed, the guardianship of the army was in the hands of the cavalry, and most efficiently were its duties performed. They picketed the banks of the river, placed their sentinels on the flanks, and kept General Lee so well informed that he was cognizant of every movement of his opponents.

On the 10th of October, or thereabout, Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, with a part of his command, crossed the Potomac and entered

upon and accomplished his famous "Maryland and Pennsylvania Raid": making the entire circuit of the Federal army, and capturing about one thousand horses. Soon after he started, all the cavalry of the Federal army were after him like wild-fire; but it was an unavailing pursuit, as they succeeded in reaching the river-bank just in time to recognize the backs of Stuart's men on the Virginia shore, wending their way "home again." Several of our men were wounded, and one or two missing; but this was the sum total of Stuart's casualties during the jaunt. General McClellan's report, assigning reasons for the non-capture of these visitors, fills about three printed pages. With full knowledge of the parties connected therewith, it requires but few words to tell the whole story: Stuart was in every sense of the word an accomplished cavalry general, and as such he was not given to napping when there was any likelihood of being caught.

#### GENERAL LEE'S SPURS

The spurs worn by Gen. Robert E. Lee on reviews, inspection tours, and all special occasions were of such peculiarly handsome design that our readers will find the following descriptive items, furnished by an old Confederate major of artillery, worthy of interest. "They were made of pure silver," he relates; "broad, flat, and sloping to the center. The heels formed to represent the head and neck of a swan, evidenced artistic workmanship and skill in design; they were arranged for the use of either of four sets of rowels, the teeth of which ranged respectively, five, eight, sixteen, and thirty-two,—each set being of different colored metal: gold, straw, pale blue, and dark blue. By means of a small screw the general was enabled to use either set at pleasure, without inconvenience of any sort. The straps were of the finest buff leather procurable, with mountings and buckles of solid silver. A neat mahogany box, tastefully lined with fine blue velvet, containing a small screw-driver, manufactured for it, completed this outfit.

"The circumstances which gave rise to the manufacture of these particular spurs are these: On the day succeeding the second battle of Manassas, General Lee was standing near the Stone Bridge; (the structure across Bull Run, four miles above Centreville); a number of his officers were around him, and he had thrown the bridle rein of his famous "Gray" that was beside

him, over his arm. A column of cavalry, which was ascertained afterwards to be our own, having appeared on top of the hill beyond the run, along which our infantry pickets were stretched, was fired upon through the misapprehension that it came with hostile intention. The firing of this volley resulted in startling the old "Gray" into a plunge forward, which threw General Lee violently to the ground, severely fracturing some of the bones in his right hand, and disabling him to such an extent that he was compelled to substitute for the back of his horse the interior of an ambulance during nearly the whole time of the Maryland campaign. The said ambulance was the same that had been captured from General McClellan's army in the battles around Richmond. When the army had returned to Virginia, and was quietly encamped in the valley heretofore mentioned, General Lee sent for Major George Duffey (of the artillery referred to) and asked him the loan of a pair of spurs, stating to his visitor that he had lost his own.<sup>1</sup> Major Duffey complied with his request, and then told him he would have a pair made for him. Major Duffey issued his orders for them at the earliest available moment, gathered the necessary materials, and then superintended the construction of his ideal until the silver spurs described were completed in all their beauty.

"He then carried them to Headquarters and presented them to General Lee, who accepted them with every evidence of appreciative admiration. This presentation was made in the presence of several English gentlemen, visitors to the Army of Northern Virginia, and among them Col. Sir Garnet Wolseley, who seemed very deeply interested in the unique beauty of the gift. After the spurs had been thoroughly and critically examined by each, one of the Englishmen asked General Lee: 'Are they not imported?' To which the General replied, 'Ah! gentlemen, you think we are poor rebels and barbarians. You make a mistake. They were not only made in the Confederacy, but here on this field, with the rough tools we use in repairing artillery and small arms.' "

<sup>1</sup> The old spurs were found afterwards hanging in the McClellan ambulance.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE ARMIES ON THE MOVE

**A** MONTH'S delightful repose in the valley had worked almost miraculously in strengthening, both physically and numerically, General Lee's army; and by the last of October it aggregated about 60,000 effective men.

On the 23rd of October the Federal Army, with ranks enlarged by hired representatives from nearly every habitable portion of the globe, except the South, began to cross the Potomac River into Loudon County, east of the Blue Ridge. A vague idea of the magnitude of the host being thrust upon us can be formed from the fact that six days were required for its transportation to the Virginia shore. It was not until the 5th of November that the outposts reached the vicinity of Warrenton, in Fauquier County. At Upperville the cavalry of General Stuart had been thrown in their front, and as soon as General Lee ascertained definitely in which direction the swarm was moving he detached Longstreet's corps, and by easy marches it was moved to Culpeper Court House; General Jackson's corps having remained to guard the valley. The main army of McClellan was encamped at that time on the Manassas Gap Railroad. Just then, too, one of his reconnoitering parties made the attempt to cross the Shenandoah River at Castleman's Ferry; but two brigades of Gen. A. P. Hill's division were on hand to receive and disperse them with a loss of several hundred men.

During our encampment in the attractive county of Culpeper, —whose red mud is a well-remembered feature, and where our corps remained about three weeks, and resumed their guard and picket duties,—the ranks were considerably augmented by the return of convalescents. Orders were issued on several occasions for us to be in readiness to move at a moment's notice, consequently, when each proved to be the result of false alarm, we had the recreation of re-pitching our tents. The authorities at the Federal metropolis were experiencing great dissatisfaction with what seemed to them the tardiness of General McClellan's



movements; for his second "On to Richmond" resembled up to this moment somewhat the uncoiling of a monster serpent that had stretched its length from the rocky side of the Potomac to the grassy plains and lovely hills of old Fauquier, and was resting there, as if preferring to bask in the sunlight to be found there to undertaking the forward movement necessary for reaching its destination. This, in connection with other reasons of which the wire-pullers of the United States Government were alone cognizant, occasioned General McClellan's recall. He was superseded by General Burnside, who assumed command of the army, located as we have stated before, and very soon after, the lethargy therein seemed dispelled and the new broom stirred up their camps.

On the 15th of November the Federals began their movement south; and the head of their columns arrived at Fredericksburg on the 17th. Our corps (Longstreet's) did not follow immediately, but remained in camp for some days, and then taking up the line of march, by the 23d were between Burnside and Richmond. We ascertained that our enemies were busily engaged in fortifying and in every way strengthening their position on the Stafford side of the Rappahannock River. It has often been a matter of great wonder that they did not, without any delay, cross the water while the way was open and protected at that point only by a few pickets.

General Lee at this stage of the campaign ordered General Jackson to follow Longstreet's corps, and the 22nd found him on the march with his veterans, who, on the first of December, arrived near Guinea's Station, south of Longstreet's position.

Until the 30th of November the encampments near Fredericksburg maintained such perfect quietude that a person unfamiliar with the real status of affairs, dropping suddenly upon the arena, would not readily have realized that two hostile powers were upon the verge of deadly combat. On the morning of the 30th, General Burnside put into execution his long-cherished project of bombarding the defenceless town of Fredericksburg, then occupied only by women and children, and those detained in their own homes there by the infirmities of age. His guns were opened thereupon, and a large quantity of iron and powder distributed, by which, fortunately for the non-combatants, no great damage was effected. The children were a good deal frightened and the other inhabitants considerably inconvenienced.

On the 3rd of December quite a lively artillery battle took

place between the guns of D. H. Hill's division, twenty miles below Fredericksburg, at Port Royal (to which point that general had been sent to protect the river crossings), and several of the United States gunboats. The telling performance of our field-pieces was evidenced by the change of position adopted by their officers; taking refuge behind the town, they vented upon it all the spite a furious cannonade would represent. This was done without the slightest notice to the inhabitants,—a few decrepit old men, as has been said, and the remainder women and children in their own houses. The shadow of the Omnipotent above protected them during this outrage upon civilized warfare. One poor black was wounded and a dog killed.

Our guns continued to pepper the Federals so severely that they concluded to relinquish their efforts, and withdrew temporarily. It was several days before they returned with a reënforcement of five gunboats, which were also entertained by the efficient gunners of Hill's division, and soon left, apparently satisfied.

General Lee had disposed of his forces so judiciously as to meet with promptness whatever attempts were made by the enemy to expedite movements in his forward march to Richmond. Notice was given on the 11th by the Confederate signal guns that General Burnside's forces were in motion and making preparation for attack. As we were all ready for the fray, nothing remained for us in order to receive their greeting but to occupy the positions assigned to us and await their advance.

The colonel of the Seventeenth Virginia Regiment, Montgomery D. Corse, had been promoted to a brigadier-generalship, and the brigade, formed for his especial command, consisted of the Fifteenth, Seventeenth, Twenty-ninth, and Thirtieth Regiments of Virginia troops. It was thereafter known as Corse's Brigade.

## CHAPTER XXIII

THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG. DECEMBER 11-14, 1862

UPON the 11th of December, when the signal guns had performed their mission, the Army of Northern Virginia moved out from their camps, and each division assumed the position to which it had been assigned. Our adversaries commenced their grand procession before daylight. Their commander decided to cross the river with his pontoons in two places—three bridges to be thrown across in front of the town, while two others were to be placed about two miles further down the stream.

Our picket line was composed of the brigade of General Barksdale, which was disposed of as follows the Seventeenth Mississippi and the Eighth Florida were in the rear of the stone walls and in the houses bordering on the river, above and in front of the town, the Eighteenth Mississippi guarded the crossing near Deep Run, while the remainder of the command, including the Third Georgia, was held in reserve. The working forces of the enemy employed in bridging the river in front of the town were promptly fired upon as soon as they commenced operations, and so unerring was the aim of the clear-sighted riflemen from our picket line that very little progress was made. Again and again during the day similar attempts were made by the Federals to effect their purpose, but each proved unavailing, as their losses were frightfully great. Therefore the arrangement of another plan became necessary before it was possible for them to accomplish their aim, and thus they worked it: Turning their pontoon boats into transports, three of their regiments were ferried over in sections, and having by this means gained a foothold on the south bank, they attacked and caused our men to evacuate that particular point.

While this was transpiring the invaders opened their guns upon the town, and upon our lines generally, firing (according to their own historians) fifty rounds from each of their 157 guns stationed upon the heights. This bombardment will never be

forgotten by those who heard it. Night closed in, and our troops quietly awaited the further advance of the enemy, who had thus far not succeeded in crossing the river.

General Lee had selected a strong position on the hills in rear of and west of Fredericksburg, his lines extending to the river on his right and left. McLaws' division held possession of the heights back of the town, with Anderson's division on their left and extending to Taylor's Hill on the river. Pickett's division, on the right of McLaws', occupied the "Horseshoe" that was formed by the hills; this was masked with forty pieces of artillery in readiness for action. Hood's division was at Hamilton's Crossing, and Ramseur's filled in the gap between Hood and Pickett. Jackson's corps occupied the right, the line extending to the river seven or eight miles below Fredericksburg. The cavalry and horse-artillery protected the flanks.

Through the morning of the 12th there was quiet until about 9 o'clock, when the artillery opened fire, and very soon after, the musketry broke loose upon the front of McLaws' division; but the action soon ceased. A heavy fog had settled in the valley, and under the cover of it our opponents were pushing across the river, and taking position for the approaching struggle. The entire day was occupied by them in crossing and reconnoitering our lines.

The 13th of December was one of the dark, damp, murky-looking days for which London is said to be noted. The plains above and below the town were enveloped in a fog so impenetrable that nothing was discernible in the direction of the river from our lines. At midday, however, the sun made his appearance, and rapidly the veil was lifted by the dazzling brightness of his majesty, and the gloom soon was dispersed.

Then came the tug of war. The lines on both sides of the town opened upon each other a tremendous artillery fire, which fairly shook the earth; and this noise, interspersed with the roar of musketry, was well-nigh deafening. The portion of Longstreet's corps to the left and in the rear of Fredericksburg (the divisions of Anderson and McLaws) was contending against at least one half of the Federal army under General Sumner, and consequently bore the brunt of the attack.

The enemy approached brigade front, with intervals of 200 paces. French's division, supported by that of Hancock, led the advance, and while moving through the town by the flank they were greatly exposed to a concentrated fire, from the semicircu-

lar crest in front of them, manned by our artillerists, a fire so destructive and demoralizing that at times the gaps thus made in their lines were of such magnitude that they could be seen at a considerable distance. The stone wall and the rifle-pits along the Telegraph Road, at the foot of Marye's Heights and a space of perhaps two hundred yards in their front, were under the protection of one brigade, that of General Cobb, who was reënforced at different periods during the afternoon by the arrival of seven additional regiments. This meagre force, numbering in all about 5,000 men, proved its efficiency in meeting and repelling the numerous assaults of the aggressing columns.

At this point the fight was terrific. As soon as French's division burst out upon the plain our artillery showered forth its shot and shell in desperate earnestness, mowing great spaces in the ranks, which were closed up by the successive hordes pressing forward to the charge. There was no lack of courage shown by the Federal troops; but when the approach to our line was made, the galling fire of the musketry at short range so doubled them up that, shattered and torn, they fell back, leaving a heavy percentage of their number on the field.

Closely succeeding these came Hancock's division, advancing gallantly, notwithstanding the continuance of the same deadly fire; but it, too, succumbed at last and retired after losing heavily. Many of their dead had fallen within from twenty to fifty feet of our line.

Then came the divisions of Howard and Sturgis and Griffin, to renew the assault and meet the same award; for they, too, were hurled back upon their reserves, with severe loss. The skill with which our artillery was handled and its peculiarly favorable positions secured the concentration of its fire upon the points occupied by our assailants in their advance.

Later in the day Hooker's corps, from the north side of the river, was brought over, with orders to attack our seemingly invincible veterans. Humphrey's division was formed in columns of assault, and, as a forlorn hope, ordered in. And in it went; and, like its predecessors, not to tarry, but to feel how futile its effort; for of the 4000 who entered the battle, 1000 fell. The sight presented by the field in front of General Cobb's position, heretofore described, was too harrowing for description. The dead had fallen in piles, six and seven deep, with thousands of wounded, groaning in their agony or gasping through the short interval that elapsed ere the coming of death's release.

On our right the fighting had been similarly sanguinary. The divisions of Hood and Ramseur, and, further to the right, Jackson's corps, all became engaged. The columns of the enemy passed down along the bank of the river until they arrived opposite the lines of our troops that were posted within the skirt of woods at Hamilton's Crossing, and on further to the right; they were brought to brigade front and advanced to the attack. The open plains in front of and to our right were alive with dense masses of troops, moving forward four lines deep, all bent on whipping us, their banners flying gaily, and their bayonets glistening in the sunlight.

Charge upon charge was made upon the hardy fellows under Hood's command, who were posted on the edge of the woods. There was but one point at which our lines gave way, and then it was only a temporary yielding, as the reserves pressed promptly forward and drove the enemy back. At every other point as far as the river on the right, where the cavalry filled their part, they were repulsed.

Meade's division, which led the attack against Jackson's left, lost more than forty per cent of its men.

The Federal forces having been badly crippled, the fighting ceased at nightfall, and they retired from the field, leaving us in possession of all their dead and wounded.

The sight that presented itself in the face of our own division was one with the grandeur of which "a looker on in Venice" during that afternoon would have been lastingly impressed, yet would have been powerless to describe with accuracy. The estimate made of the Federal force in sight at the time was 60,00 men. Beautifully they moved—lines upon lines, preserving perfect order and in quick succession—upon the brave men upon our right, only to melt into comparative nothingness as the blue smoke curled voluminously above the Confederate position. Soon fleeing men and maddened riderless horses were rushing headlong to the rear, and no effort was availing to induce the same body of men to encounter for the second time that galling, merciless fire.

In quiet passed the night succeeding the battle, and Sunday morning came in, radiantly beautiful. Plainly to be seen passing down the river to our right was one column after another of our late visitors; their congé, though unceremonious, told us of a breathing spell in which to "set our house in order" for the next influx. General Burnside seemed fully satisfied that the Con-

federates had borne his test of their zeal and that they were in earnest.

Copied from the "War Records," the following extracts from the reports of the battle of Fredericksburg are given.

General Lee says:

On the morning of the 13th the plain on which the Federal army lay was still enveloped in fog, making it impossible to discern its operations. At an early hour the batteries on the heights of Stafford began to play on Longstreet's position. Shortly after 9 a. m. the partial rising of the mist disclosed a large force moving in line of battle against Jackson. Dense masses appeared in front of A. P. Hill, stretching far up the river in the direction of Fredericksburg. As they advanced, Major Pelham, of Stuart's Horse Artillery, who was stationed near the Port Royal Road with one section, opened a rapid and well-directed enfilade fire, which arrested their progress. Four batteries immediately turned upon him, but he sustained their heavy fire with the unflinching courage that ever distinguished him. Upon his withdrawal, the enemy extended his left down the Port Royal Road, and his numerous batteries opened with vigor upon Jackson's line. Eliciting no response, his infantry moved forward to seize the position occupied by Lieutenant-Colonel Walker. The latter, reserving his fire until their line approached within less than 800 yards, opened upon it with such destructive effect as to cause it to waver and soon to retreat in confusion.

About one p. m. the main attack on our right began by a furious cannonade, under cover of which three compact lines of infantry advanced against Hill's front. They were received, as before, by our batteries, by whose fire they were momentarily checked; but, soon recovering, they pressed forward until, coming within range of our infantry, the contest became fierce and bloody. Archer and Lane repulsed those portions of the line immediately in front of them, but before the interval between these commands could be closed, the enemy pressed through in overwhelming numbers and turned the left of Archer and the right of Lane. Attacked in front and flank, two regiments of the former and the brigade of the latter, after a brave and obstinate resistance, gave way. Archer held his line with the First Tennessee, and, with the Fifth Alabama Battalion, assisted by the Forty-seventh Virginia Regiment and the Twenty-second Virginia Battalion, continued the struggle until the arrival of reinforcements. Thomas came gallantly to the relief of Lane, and joined by the Seventh and part of the Eighteenth North Carolina, of that brigade, repulsed the column that had broken Lane's line and drove it back to the railroad.

In the meantime a large force had penetrated the wood as far as Hill's reserve, and encountered Gregg's brigade. The attack was

so sudden and unexpected that Orr's Rifles, mistaking the enemy for our own troops retiring, were thrown into confusion. While in the act of rallying them, that brave soldier and true patriot, Brig.-Gen. Maxey Gregg, fell mortally wounded. Colonel Hamilton, upon whom the command devolved, with the four remaining regiments of the brigade and one company of the Rifles, met the enemy firmly and checked his further progress. The second line was advanced to the support of the first. Lawton's brigade first encountered the enemy, quickly followed on the right and left by the brigades of Trimble (under Colonel Hoke) and Early (under Colonel Walker). Taliaferro's division moved forward at the same time on Early's left and his right regiment (the Second Virginia, belonging to Paxton's brigade) joined in the attack. The contest in the woods was short and decisive. The enemy was quickly routed and driven out with loss, and, though largely reënforced, he was forced back and pursued to the shelter of the railroad embankment. Here he was gallantly charged by the brigades of Hoke and Atkinson, and driven across the plain to his batteries. Atkinson continuing the pursuit too far, his flank became exposed, and at the same time a heavy fire of musketry and artillery was directed against his front. Its ammunition becoming exhausted, and Colonel Atkinson being severely wounded and Captain E. P. Lawton (assistant adjutant-general), mortally wounded, the brigade was compelled to fall back to the main body, now occupying our original line of battle, with detachments thrown forward to the railroad.

The attack on Hill's left was repulsed by the artillery on the part of the line against which the enemy directed a hot fire from twenty-four guns. One brigade advanced up Deep Run, sheltered by its banks from our batteries, but was charged and put to flight by the Sixteenth North Carolina, of Pender's brigade, assisted by the Fifty-fourth and Fifty-seventh North Carolina, of Law's brigade, Hood's division.

The repulse of the enemy on our right was decisive, and the attack was not renewed, but his batteries kept up an active fire at intervals, and sharpshooters skirmished along the front during the rest of the afternoon.

While these events were transpiring on our right, the enemy, in formidable numbers, made repeated and desperate assaults upon the left of our line.

About 11 a. m., having massed his troops under cover of the houses in Fredericksburg, he moved forward in strong columns to seize Marye's and Willis' Hills. General Ransom advanced Cooke's brigade to the top of the hill, and placed his own, with the exception of the Twenty-fourth North Carolina, a short distance in the rear. All the batteries on the Stafford Heights directed their fire upon the positions occupied by our artillery, with a view to silence it and cover



the movement of the infantry. Without replying to this furious cannonade, our batteries poured a rapid and destructive fire into the dense lines of the enemy as they advanced to the attack, frequently breaking their ranks and forcing them to retreat to the shelter of the houses. Six times did the enemy, notwithstanding the havoc caused by our batteries, press on with great determination to within 100 yards of the foot of the hill, but here encountering the deadly fire of our infantry, his columns were broken and fled in confusion to the town.

In the third assault, the brave and lamented Brig.-Gen. Thomas R. Cobb fell, at the head of his gallant troops, and at almost the same moment Brigadier-General Cooke was borne from the field severely wounded. Fearing that Cobb's brigade might exhaust its ammunition, General Longstreet had directed General Kershaw to take two regiments to its support. Arriving after the fall of General Cobb, he assumed command, his troops taking position on the crest and at the foot of the hill, to which point General Ransom also advanced three other regiments. The Washington Artillery, which had sustained the heavy fire of artillery and infantry with unshaken steadiness and contributed much to the repulse of the enemy, having exhausted its ammunition, was relieved about 4 p. m. by Colonel Alexander's battalion. The latter occupied the position during the rest of the engagement, and, by its well-directed fire, rendered great assistance in repelling the assaults made in the afternoon, the last of which occurred shortly before dark. This effort met the fate of those that preceded it; and, when night closed in, the shattered masses of the enemy had disappeared in the town, leaving the field covered with dead and wounded. Anderson's division supported the batteries on Longstreet's left, and, though not engaged, was exposed throughout the day to a hot artillery fire, which it sustained with steady courage.

General Jackson says:

About 10 o'clock, as the fog disappeared, the lines of the enemy, arranged in order of battle, were distinctly visible in the plain between us and the river, covering my front and extending far to the left toward Fredericksburg. The force in front of me I supposed to number about 55,000.

About 1 o'clock the main attack was made by heavy and rapid discharges of artillery. Under protection of this warm and well-directed fire, his infantry in heavy force advanced, seeking the partial protection of a piece of wood extending beyond the railroad. The batteries on the right played on their ranks with destructive effect. The advancing force was visibly staggered by our rapid and well-directed artillery; but, soon recovering from the shock, the Federal troops, consisting of the main body of Franklin's grand

division, continued to press forward. Advancing within point-blank range of our infantry, and thus to the murderous fire of musketry and artillery, the struggle became fierce and sanguinary. They continued, however, still to press forward, and before General A. P. Hill closed the interval which he had left between Archer and Lane it was penetrated, and the enemy, pressing forward in overwhelming numbers through that interval, turned Lane's right and Archer's left. .

The enemy was not permitted to hold the advantage he had thus gained. The second line came promptly to the support of the first. .

The combat in the woods was brief and decisive. The further advance of the enemy was checked. He was driven with great slaughter from the wood to the railroad, the two regiments of Brockenbrough's command, etc., etc., pursuing the retreating Federals to the railroad, where they made a brief stand, when H6ke and Atkinson charged upon them with impetuosity, destroying many in the charge, and taking a large number of prisoners. Nor did they stop then, but, impelled by an ardor which reflects the highest credit on their courage and patriotism, this comparatively small force pressed the discomfited foe in hot pursuit until they appeared so far within range of his artillery, and the fire of a large force of his infantry, as to make further pursuit an act of rashness.

Repulsed on the right, left and center, the enemy soon re-formed his lines and gave some indication of a purpose to renew the attack. I waited some time to receive it; but he making no forward movement, I determined, if prudent, to do so myself. The artillery of the enemy was so judiciously posted as to make an advance of our troops across the plain very hazardous; yet it was so promising of good results, if successfully executed, as to induce me to make preparations for the attempt. In order to guard against disaster, the infantry was to be preceded by artillery, and the movement postponed until late in the evening, so that, if compelled to retire, it would be under the cover of night. Owing to unexpected delays, the movement could not be gotten ready until late in the evening. The first gun had hardly moved forward from the wood 100 yards when the enemy's artillery reopened, and so completely swept our front as to satisfy me that the proposed movement should be abandoned.

Gen. A. P. Hill, referring to the enemy's occupation of the gap left between two of his brigades, says:

The combat was short, sharp, and decisive. The rattling musketry and charging yell of the Fifth Alabama Battalion, the Forty-seventh Virginia, and Twenty-second Virginia Battalion, the wither-

ing fire from Hamilton's regiment right in their faces, was more than Yankee firmness could stand. In addition to this, that gallant old warrior, General Early, to whom I had sent, requesting that he would move down to my support, came crashing through the woods at the double-quick. The enemy, completely broken, fled in confusion.

General Hooker, Federal, says of the contest on our left:

At 1:30 o'clock, or thereabouts, I received orders to cross this corps and attack. Before the corps had fully crossed, I was directed to send one division to the support of General Sturgis. General Griffith's division, the largest of the three, being nearest in position for the purpose, was assigned to this duty. General Butterfield was then left with the two smallest divisions of his corps to make an attack upon the right, when General Sumner's (Second) and a portion of the Ninth Corps, greatly outnumbering this force, had been at work all day without making any impression.

A prisoner in the morning had given to General Burnside, General Sumner, and myself full information of the position and defenses of the enemy, stating that it was their desire that we should attack at that point, in rear of Fredericksburg, on the Telegraph Road; that it was perfectly impossible for any troops to carry the position; that, if the first line were carried, a second line of batteries commanded it.

The result of the operations of General Sumner's corps, which had made a determined, spirited attack, without success, fully confirmed the statements of the prisoner. I carefully surveyed the point of attack, and, after conversation with several of the general officers of Sumner's and my own command, I was convinced that it would be a useless waste of life to attack with the force at my disposal. I dispatched an aide to General Burnside, to say that I advised him not to attack.

The reply came that the attack must be made.

Under ordinary circumstances I should have complied at once, but so impressed was I with the conviction heretofore stated, that I determined it to be my duty to the troops under my command to give General Burnside a fuller explanation, and dissuade him, if possible, from what I considered a hopeless attack, especially as the few movements it would take for this purpose could not possibly effect the result of the attack in the slightest degree. Accordingly I did so. The General insisted upon the attack being made.

I returned and brought up every available battery, with the intention of breaking their barrier, to enable Butterfield's attacking column to carry the crest. This artillery fire was continued with great vigor until near sunset, when the attack with bayonet was made

by Humphreys' division, General Sykes' division moving on its right, to assault *en échelon* and support. This attack was made with a spirit and determination seldom, if ever, equaled in war. The impregnable position of the enemy had given them so strong an advantage that the attack was almost immediately repulsed, and Sykes' division was recalled, without having fully assaulted, to cover the withdrawal of Humphreys'. This movement was a necessity, for the loss and repulse of the attacking columns had been so severe that should the enemy have followed up their advantage, without precaution, the result could not have failed to be of the most disastrous character.

General Franklin, Federal, in his report of the battle on our right, says:

At 8:30 o'clock General Meade's division moved forward about 500 yards, and, turning to the right, pushed to the wood near Bowling Green road. I was met by a severe fire of artillery. The fire was answered by the artillery of Reynolds' corps, which, in the course of two hours or more, silenced the enemy's batteries. The wood in which the enemy's infantry was posted was then shelled for more than half an hour, and Meade's division immediately afterward moved on to the attack. In the meantime the two divisions of General Stoneman's corps, which had been detailed as supports, and were then at the bridges, I ordered over to the support of General Reynolds. The advance of General Meade was made under a general fire of the enemy's batteries, which was answered by all of Reynolds' and Smith's batteries, so that the artillery action became general along the whole line. Meade pressed into the wood, carried it, crossed the railroad, and gained the crest of the hill, capturing two flags and about 200 prisoners. At the crest of the hill the combat was kept up for some time. At the same time Gibbon's division advanced, across the railroad, entered the woods, and took some prisoners, driving back the first line of the enemy; but the wood was so dense that the connection between Meade's and his line could not be kept up. In consequence of this fact, Meade's line, which was vigorously attacked by a large column of fresh troops, could not hold its ground, and was repulsed, leaving the wood at a walk, but not in order. Generals Reynolds and Meade rallied them beyond the Bowling Green road. Gibbon's division was also repulsed shortly afterward. Just as Meade was repulsed, two regiments of Berry's brigade, Birney's division, Stoneman's corps, which had just arrived, were thrown into the wood on Gibbon's left. They also were soon driven out. While Meade's division was getting rallied, the remainder of Birney's division came up and drove the enemy from the front of the wood, where he had appeared in strong force. This

division, with the aid of the artillery, soon drove the enemy back to shelter, and he did not again appear.

The losses rate thus: Union forces 12,653; Confederates 5693. So say the official reports in the "War Records." The battle of Fredericksburg, fought on the 13th day of December, 1862, cannot, with any approximation to truth, be recorded otherwise than as one of the most disastrous to the Federal arms, and as such will be handed down to posterity.

#### SYNOPSIS

With about half of his full force of sixty-five thousand men (the remainder not becoming engaged) of all arms, our great Chieftain Lee had vanquished his opponent, General Burnside, and his command of 135,000 troops—a difference in numbers unnecessary to comment upon just here. The position of the Confederates—on the left, back of, and above the town of Fredericksburg—was impregnable, but the contest on the right between the enemy and a portion of the corps of Jackson, two divisions of Longstreet's corps (Hood and Ramseur), and the cavalry under Stuart, was a fair, square fight. The grand division of General Franklin, which had crossed at Deep Run, numbering 50,000 men, formed the attacking force. The ground upon which the Confederates held their position was comparatively level, and thus would have placed the Federals as their assailants under somewhat of a disadvantage, had there been no excess of numbers in their favor. It was a fight for victory or death. The masterly hand of the accomplished warrior Jackson guided the defenders in the movements, which, in a measure, secured the victory. Confidence in superior generalship rendered the men promptly obedient to orders; they moved with alacrity and held tenaciously the ground they so loved. Both armies fought well, but the Confederates had supreme advantage in the foresight and well-developed brains of those at the helm.

When the victory had been achieved, but before General Burnside's army had crossed to the safer side of the river, a report was currently circulated throughout our camps to the effect that Generals Jackson and Longstreet were both in favor of an attack that night upon the confused ranks of the foeman, impressed with the belief that they could be readily annihilated.

The cause for not carrying this into execution, deponent sayeth not.

Pickett's division occupied a line considerably in the rear of, but directly facing, the plains south of the town. Toward the close of the day, while the battle was at its height, a picturesque scene presented itself on our right; for here appeared, from the River Road, in all the elegance of an afternoon parade, with bayonets shining in the brightness of a glorious evening's sun, a brigade of Federal infantry, marching toward us, their skirmishers in front feeling their way.

The meadow land before us was well covered with a heavy growth of tangled grass sufficiently high to conceal the recumbent figures of our pickets, who, with bated breath, eagerly watched therefrom the steady oncoming of this hostile array. As their skirmishers continued to approach, the keen, quick, telling report of our sharpshooters' rifles, succeeded by the blue smoke rising in puffs and rolling overhead, gave sufficient announcement that our marksmen were on the alert. Firing in rotation, and falling back as though engaged in an ordinary drill, our astute pickets beguiled the Federals on. A short distance to our right ran a strip of woodland, jutting out into the open field; at the very end of this piece of timber, without any previous intimation of their presence, there burst forth at a rapid gallop a section of field artillery in the full panoply of war. Upon reaching a point in close proximity to the front of the enemy's line of battle, the pieces were quickly unlimbered, as rapidly sighted, and then poured forth their thundering roar.

At the same time a brigade of Confederate infantry deployed in line from the sheltering brushwood, and charging with a yell, caused the Federals to retire. The time elapsing between the sudden entrance of the artillery upon the field and the withdrawal of the enemy was so brief that the reality seemed almost a vision. Their purpose executed, our troops were in a few minutes back in line, and their wounded, of whom there were several, sent to the rear, and everything had resumed an air of perfect quiet—just as if nothing had occurred to disturb it.

The night of Monday the 15th was dismal and rainy; and General Burnside availed himself of its darkness to elude General Lee's grasp by slipping his army away and landing it on the Stafford shores, leaving his dead soldiers to us for burial. One could form no idea of the extent of the work thus assigned us,

without some little detail of the mortality at different points of the field. Let us specify this one instance:

In front of the road and stone wall where the brigade of General Cobb had dealt such heavy blows, there were counted within the area of about two acres as many as 1100 dead. This was at a point on our line in rear of the town, where so many desperate charges were made and repulsed. The bodies lay in heaps, just as they had fallen—many of them near our lines. That the fighting was that of determined spirits is fully evidenced by its sanguinary results.

## CHAPTER XXIV

THE CAVALRY AT WORK. UPS AND DOWNS. DEC., 1862-JAN., 1863

**A**FTER the turbulent storm of Fredericksburg was spent, it did not take us so very long to settle down into the quiet routine of soldier life, with our picket lines formed on the river bank.

The winter, as it advanced, became piercingly cold, which occasioned a great deal of suffering among the soldiers; but, despite the discomfort, little complaint was heard. The rations, fairly good, were greatly appreciated, as were also the warm fires and good, clean camps, sheltered from the northern winds by the thick woods on the hills about them. Some memorably pleasant days were enjoyed; though, as must be expected in times like those, some brought their drawbacks and interspersed our enjoyments with something more like business—business, too, that was not always so easy to perform. Take the following case for example:

On Friday morning, the 19th of December, we had made ourselves thoroughly comfortable, and were most pleasantly congratulating ourselves upon the situation matters had assumed, when orders were received for the division to march. The tents were struck, the baggage packed, the lines formed, and marching out upon the open hillside, we patiently awaited further orders. As night approached these orders reached us; and the lines were dismissed, to re-perform the work undone by the marching orders; and, as the cold had not abated at all, many felt its effects severely and pronounced that Friday one of the “Long, long, weary days” in soldier life.

December 25, 1862, our second Christmas on the tented field, was not one of jubilant rollicking. Reason had time to feast and soul to flow, but the tonic usually availed of palpably to quicken them was not about, except among the few, who were prolific of means to secure and ways to smuggle it into camp; and this they managed to do so adroitly that John Barleycorn's presence was known only by the disguise he is apt to furnish. There was



little to be seen in the way of extra eatables, but we did the best we could.

On the 27th the camps of our corps were moved back to within a short distance of Guinea Station, where two very necessary provisions for the health and comfort of an army were found—the abundant supplies of wood and water. It was here we went into winter quarters; and soon we were comfortably situated.

While the army was in the vicinity of Fredericksburg during the months of December and January, the cavalry, under the command of Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, achieved a series of successful feats. On the 2nd of December, a detachment from the Ninth Virginia Regiment, consisting of some sixty dismounted men under Major Walker, crossed the Rappahannock River below Port Royal in skiffs, attacked the enemy's pickets, defeated them, capturing forty-nine prisoners, with their arms and horses, and with these recrossed the river, without loss to themselves.

On the 12th a detachment from General Hampton's brigade made a call upon the town of Dumfries, during which they cut the enemy's line of communications, captured a train of twenty-four sutler's wagons, with its guard of about fifty men, and came safely back to camp, bringing with them their prisoners and seventeen wagons. They did not lose one of their men.

On the 17th General Hampton, with a detachment of his troopers, made another trip to the enemy's rear, and this time his visit was to the town of Occoquan. Every Federal picket,—and there were forty-one,—was captured, and our horsemen, in three columns, entered the town, where they found a train of wagons crossing the river. Forcing the guard to surrender, they took possession of the wagons, capturing meanwhile all the pickets (about twenty) on the Telegraph Road and several wagons, which were brought to the main body near the town. Learning that a considerable force of the enemy was approaching, General Hampton forthwith dispatched a column of sharpshooters, to hold the Federals in check while he managed to transport the wagons over the river in a small boat. The enemy continued to approach nearer and nearer, but each time we drove them back, until finally, fearing they would cross at a ford a mile and a quarter distant and thus get in his rear, Hampton decided to move off over the river with the spoils already gathered. Leaving a rear guard to check the enemy and to follow the main body an hour after, he safely wended his way, reach-

ing his camp on the 19th with one hundred and fifty prisoners, twenty wagons laden with valuable stores, thirty stands of arms and one stand of colors. And all this was done without the loss of a man.

December 27th to 29th brought stirring times to the Federals, for General Stuart was on the rampage, and with a column of 1800 men had penetrated their lines, caused great excitement in their rear, and brought disgrace and disaster to more than a few of them. A brigade of their infantry held possession of Dumfries, and this prevented its capture; but a number of men and all the army wagons in and around Occoquan were captured. The column then turned toward Alexandria, captured a camp on the Occoquan River, burned a bridge near Accotink Run, then passed on near Fairfax Court House to Vienna, Middleburg, Warrenton and Culpeper Court House, reëntering our lines on the 31st. At Burke's Station, on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, General Stuart took possession of the telegraph office, and through an operator in his party, he had the satisfaction of learning the details of preparations in process for his reception. Here he dispatched a message to the Quartermaster-General, at Washington, in which he complained that the inferior quality of the mules recently furnished by the U. S. Government had interfered seriously with his removal of the captured wagons.

In this expedition General Stuart secured a large number of horses, mules, wagons, saddles, bridles, pistols, and sabres, while his prisoners were in excess of two hundred. His loss was one killed, six wounded, and several missing.

Several smaller affairs transpired between the cavalry of the two armies during this period, in each of which the Federals came out second best.

#### UPS AND DOWNS

None but a veteran in years and experience can fully appreciate the many and varied ups and downs that are attendant upon an army in winter quarters. Among those of downward tendency,—and perhaps the most irksome,—was the monotonous round of daily life; the routine of one day furnishing a fair sample of its successive requirements, with but little if any variation. Picket duty, though often in the severest kind of weather,—cold, wet, and freezing,—was considered for the time being a veritable “up.” So much, indeed, did it savor of recreation, by

way of contrast, that the men were ever ready to be called upon for such service, and moved promptly, with brightening faces and cheery mien, as if leaving a task to enjoy a pleasant pastime.

The drill was almost an impracticable exercise on account of the miry condition of the ground during the greater part of the time, though occasionally, when it became thoroughly frozen and thus sufficiently hardened, a dress parade, or inspection, would take place, greatly to the satisfaction of all suffering from inertia. It was, doubtless, to relieve the tedious monotony of camp life that details from the various regiments were required by General Lee's orders to work on the trenches; there being no other reason of which we knew, as it was hardly possible and not at all probable that the Federals would make another assault upon our lines. Consideration for the welfare of his soldiers was ever uppermost with him.

Marching was also a very pleasant change, since it exhilarated the boys with the prospect of a brush with the foe, until the faces were aglow with anticipation. Sometimes, however, it proved anything other than pleasure, as will be attested by the coming incident

It was the 27th day of January, 1863, and as the rain was pouring in torrents, the soldiers were closely ensconced in their quarters, hugging the comfortable fires. In the midst of this unquestionable enjoyment, orders were received for us to strike tents and march. With due promptness, the men turned out, and after the necessary arrangement of camp requisites, fell in line and filed out of their camping-ground, followed by the wagons containing their supplies of ammunition and provisions.

We moved in a northerly direction, under the down-pouring rain and through mud ankle deep. Those who read of it will think that there could have been no pleasure in this. But there surely was, for it was a break in the monotony and ranked, by acclamation, as one of the "ups."

However, it was not long before the air became very cold; the rain gave place to snow, and when we reached our destination, about fifteen miles above Fredericksburg, the snow was six inches under foot. This may be termed a somewhat severe tramp, and owing to the slippery, slushy condition of the roads, rather wearying to the travelers. The pleasure aforesaid was experienced in the first part of the march, but before it was ended, enjoyment had fallen so far below zero that the jaunt grew to be notably one of the "downs."

When a halt was finally called, it was early night, but a night of intense darkness. A bivouac was chosen while the wind, increasing in velocity, became well-nigh a hurricane, and the temperature grew colder and colder.

The place for our camp was located in a large body of pines, where in a very little while large fires were burning and other desirable arrangements made to secure comfort and rest. As the wind howled about us and hurled the snow in our faces, it also dismembered trees above us and threw down large limbs therefrom at intervals here and there throughout our resting place. As the night wore on, the fierceness of the storm increased; indeed, a veritable Western blizzard had struck us, for in lieu of the tree limbs came the uprooted trees themselves, falling among men and animals. It was an awe-inspiring night, but the wearied soldier boys slept amid it all, and He who "divided the sea whose waves roared," covered us with the shadow of His hand, and all escaped without injury. When morning came the wind had lulled, it was no longer snowing, and our situation looked greatly improved. Holding ourselves in readiness to move at a moment's notice, we remained for several days at this point, and then when the command, "Fall in!" reached us, we moved in mud and slush back to our comfortable winter quarters near Guinea Station.

After reaching camp that night many of the boys concluded to end the weariness of the day's tramp in something they regarded as akin to pleasure, and so, constituting themselves a provost guard, they marched to where it had been ascertained there was liquor kept for sale. Confiscating the entire stock, which consisted of several barrels of whiskey, they arranged at once for a lively time—and they had it, too! Many of them became so thoroughly exhilarated that, judging from the capers cut and the pranks played, no one for a moment would have supposed that they had just finished a march of fifteen miles over an almost impassable road. To the "ups" this is to be added. After being saturated from head to foot with rain or melted snow, and often being compelled to sleep in this condition, one can hardly wonder that Johnny Reb upon rare occasions thus availed himself of "a wee drap" as an antidote in bad weather, or after it. Taken "medicinally" it was the remedy for many ills, when illness did not come too often, or require too heavy doses.

It is a matter of fact that there was very little drunkenness among the soldiers in General Lee's army. With some, it may

have been from want of opportunity, but of the majority there were few, even upon such an occasion as the one just cited, who indulged to excess. Many of both the officers and the men were sincere Christians, eager to help their fellow-comrades and deter those who were inclined to imbibe too freely.

The ease enjoyed in that comfortable camping-ground, with its good water and abundance of wood, came to an end much sooner than we desired. In the height of the severest weather,—rain, snow, and sleet, sandwiched with keen winds and biting cold,—these pleasant associations were severed, and one of the most toilsome marches we ever had to endure was commenced.

## CHAPTER XXV

A MEMORABLE MARCH, FEBRUARY-APRIL, 1863

THE need of the Army of Northern Virginia for the necessary comforts of life during the severity of the weather in the winter of 1862-63 was very great, owing to the exceeding scarcity of clothing, blankets, shoes, and provisions. In order to decrease the drain upon the latter, two divisions of the army,—Pickett's and Hood's, of Longstreet's corps—were detached and sent south of Richmond, in which section the supplies for the subsistence of men and horses were abundant.

This memorable march for change of quarters was begun on the 15th of February, the tents, baggage, and all the rest of the paraphernalia of an army in the field having been transferred and loaded on the cars, so that our wagon horses,—lean and raw boned,—should have as little burden to pull over the muddy roads as could be avoided. In a storm of pouring rain that saturated each one of us, we left the comfortable winter quarters to the occupancy of more fortunate soldiers who were to remain there, and after six days' tramp through rain, slush and snow, from which there was no shelter by day or night, we reached the end of it. Some idea may be formed of the toilsome experience thereby afforded us in reading the fragmentary detail. Many of our men, having neither shoes nor blankets, had ingeniously improvised substitutes of rawhide fashioned into moccasins, and for covering used oilcloths, captured from the enemy on the field of battle.

Notwithstanding the drawbacks, the march was right merrily made, and in reasonably good time. The lightly-laden wagon-trains followed, and these entailed upon us one of our least attractive and most unpleasant duties, that of having to tramp back by companies, after getting some distance in advance, and haul those four-wheeled boxes out of the mud; for it required force to effect it. The second night was passed near Hanover Junction. A snowstorm set in after we had gone into bivouac, and

continued throughout the following day. Our march, however, was resumed in the morning, and such a march as it was! "The mud! the mud! the horrible mud!" was the only song we could croak that day, as we ploughed through it to the assistance of the unfortunate teamsters calling for assistance to extricate their wagons and horses from the stall of clay. Snow gave place to rain the next day, and through its deluge we plodded on until within five miles of Richmond, where, wet, cold, and hungry we rested through the night, though the rain fell in torrents and the air was chilly and searching.

The following day, about 10 a. m., we were again on the move and were soon passing through Richmond. Our parade on the streets of the Confederate capital was to us all a grand ovation. The sidewalks were thickly lined with ladies, and as the divisions,—marching by companies in column and bearing their tattered, battle-stained banners afloat in the misty breeze,—passed in quick-step to the tap of the drum, cheer after cheer, not boisterous, but melodious and heart-inspiring, greeted our ears, making us forget that we were either weary or travel soiled. Travel soiled! We were mud-begrimed, ragged and foot-sore; but the intense enthusiasm with which we were welcomed lent renewed activity to limbs stiffened with cold and to bodies ready to stagger from the exhaustion of a sixty-mile tramp through severe weather, with all its other accompaniments. Sandwiches were distributed by those noble women, their faces wreathed in beaming smiles as we received them with thanks deeper than words could express; for the haversacks of those so fortunate as to own them were empty of even the shadow of a crumb. Nor did any old battered canteen, secretly filled by some Samaritan with a fluid more warming to the heart than sympathetic tears (or our familiar ditch water), scatter its drops on a stony soil. The contents of canteens thus filled evaporated with such rapidity, that the old legerdemain motto seems peculiarly descriptive: "Now you see it, now you don't see it." But, rapid as was its flight, it brought balm in its way to our aching void,—not known in anatomy as the heart.

Crossing the James River at Mayo's Bridge, we passed on three miles below; here we halted, and luxuriated the following day in rest and quietude. The snow and rain having disappeared on the morning of the 21st, we again started about 10 o'clock, and pressing steadily forward, reached the vicinity of Chester Station, which is nine miles from Petersburg, before nightfall.

As we were without tents, each man selected his own spot in the open field for a resting-place, and wrapping an oilcloth, or blanket, about him lay down to peaceful slumber.

Night's sombre mantle was spread; but full soon a guest arrived, bringing heavier drapery for us. So effectual was this provision that when daylight came there was no troops in sight. Pickett's division was lost! The open fields presented the peculiar spectacle of a series of white-covered mounds, but each enclosed a sleeping soldier, buried under eight inches of "beautiful snow." The situation was truly comfortable. The Bountiful Giver had supplied us in our emergency and covered us with the "Shadow of His hand." Many of the boys did not make themselves visible until midday. The tents, baggage, and the camp equipage generally having arrived by the cars, we went once more into regular camp life, and so continued until about the first of March.

While thus located a spirited contest took place between Kemper's Virginia brigade and Jenkins' South Carolina brigade. A battle was fought,—not to the death with leaden missiles, but a friendly one for which the snow furnished ammunition in abundance, and right merrily the boys enjoyed it. The few bruises given and received occasioned no complaint, and good humor prevailed throughout. The members of other brigades who witnessed it were highly entertained, so it proved a most pleasurable afternoon to all.

With the first of March came moving time again. Breaking camp we marched to Petersburg, and by companies in column we passed through the city, and proceeding down the City Point Road about three miles, we again encamped. Here, too, the days were very pleasantly spent, though the weather was not at all times cheery; but our time was occupied in brushing up, drilling, and in other necessary preparations for the spring campaign.

The determination to use part of Longstreet's corps as a foraging party on a grand scale has been before mentioned, and for this purpose we found ourselves making ready. On the ninth of March Garnett's brigade took its departure for the vicinity of North Carolina. Kemper's brigade followed after a lapse of ten days, and on the 23rd the two brigades remaining (Armstead's and Corse's) commenced the tramp. On the 20th the heaviest snow-storm of the season began to fall and continued unabatingly until it covered the ground to the depth of fourteen inches, when rain thick and fast succeeded it, and then,—oh, the slush! slush such as is rarely seen in that section. We cannot



portray the picture of our attractive march with mud on the right, mud on the left, and water everywhere, and so experience wisely concludes that it will long be remembered by its participants, and will never be fully appreciated by those who were not there.

Ivor Station on the Petersburg & Norfolk Railroad was reached on the 25th. This locality has attained notoriety in history as the place in which the scene of Nat Tyler's negro insurrection was enacted in 1831. New Jerusalem, the point selected for his rendezvous, with his accessories, was only a few miles away from our encampment. The surface of the country in this section is flat, and the soil light and sandy. Old pines seem at this time to have been the only growth, but later on sweet potatoes in abundant crops and other trucking vegetables became the products.

With the 30th of March General Pickett put in an appearance, and established his headquarters nearby; and in the vicinity the artillery was parked, and arrangements were made to follow out the plans for securing a rich harvest in the aforesaid requisites from that and other portions of the country further south.

By the 10th of April the divisions of Hood, Jenkins, and Pickett had congregated along the line of the Blackwater River, in full readiness to cross the stream at a moment's notice, and on the following day they passed over on pontoon bridges, Generals Jenkins and Hood at Franklin, and General Pickett at South Quay, the whole force being under command of Gen. James Longstreet. By making a rapid march we were enabled to reach a point about seven miles from Suffolk, by nightfall. Moving forward about 4 o'clock the ensuing morning, by the various roads leading thereto, we reached and, before midday, encircled the town from the White Marsh, on our right, to the Nansemond River on our left. Our antagonists, who occupied Suffolk, were first apprised of our proximity, by a salutation of several shots from our artillery. Our lines were occupied as follows: Pickett's division rested on the right, Jenkins' in the center, and Hood's on the left. The portion of the lines running into the Dismal Swamp,—the extreme right,—was occupied by General Corse's brigade, and very soon thereafter heavy skirmishing began. Between the aforesaid swamp and White Marsh there is a narrow neck of land, which is accessible only by a causeway, and this was held by the Seventeenth Virginia Regiment.

## CHAPTER XXVI

THE SUFFOLK CAMPAIGN. APRIL—MAY, 1863

ON the morning of the 15th, at early dawn, when the men of this heroic little band were far away in the land of slumber, enjoying sweet dreams of their loved ones at home, they were most unceremoniously awakened by the explosion of a shell in their midst. Before it was possible for them to fall into line, the invaders were upon them with infantry and cavalry, supported by artillery, having attacked and driven in their pickets. Their predicament was by no means an enviable one, but the emergency was upon them; and as they were not novices in the art of fighting, they understood the most effective course to pursue. They immediately fell back to the rear, and taking a position in a piece of woods, opened a lively fire upon the advancing intruders. This produced the desired result, as they were very soon halted and promptly fell back, leaving in possession of the Confederates their dead and wounded, several prisoners, and a number of small arms.

As soon as practicable after this the Thirtieth and Fifty-seventh Virginia regiments arrived as a support, and the Seventeenth returned to their former position and re-occupied it.

The Confederate loss was much smaller than could have been expected, as it consisted in a few wounded and several missing.

In the afternoon our artillery opened a destructive fire upon the enemy, and our picket line was advanced during this time to a point far beyond the old position,—a point that was at once occupied, and the Federals retired as the Confederates moved forward.

Another and more decided attack was made upon us the following day, and so great were the odds against us, and so spirited the advance, that the Southern line was broken and driven in. With the assistance, however, of the Fifteenth and Thirtieth Virginia regiments, who came to the rescue, the tables were turned, the Federals were driven back, and the position regained.

The loud booming of artillery and the rattle of musketry on the left issued from a portion of Armstead's brigade in an attack upon the Federals that were occupying a thicket from which it was necessary to dislodge them, in order to straighten our lines. The purpose was effected.

Thus, from day to day there were happenings by which the Confederates were kept constantly on the alert to meet demonstrations or to make others as controlling circumstances required.

During this period the wagon-trains were busily engaged in removing to the interior of the State the bacon, hay, grain, and other forage from that section of Virginia and the northern portion of North Carolina.

On the 24th our adversaries, in front of White Marsh, engaged our pickets, who fought until each of them had fired thirty rounds of ammunition, and then retired to await the attack. As the Federals advanced and formed in a piece of woods they were in full view of the Confederate gunners, who, quickly taking advantage of the sight, opened fire upon them with destructive result, for so true was the aim and so demoralizing the effect, that they broke ranks, and, to use their own phraseology, "ske-daddled" in unmeasured haste, which was somewhat accelerated by the deafening shouts from the boys they were leaving behind them. On the following day a truce was granted so that they might remove and bury their dead.

The month of May, 1863, opened with all the beauty that Nature's lavish hand is wont to bestow upon it. Comparative quiet now reigned along our lines. With the third day came orders to prepare to march; so, in the afternoon the wagons were started to the rear, and somewhere about 9 o'clock p. m. the main body was in motion, falling back to the Blackwater River by the same roads upon which they had marched forward the previous month. By midday of the 4th the river had been crossed by the entire force, except the rear-guard, which was in line on the Suffolk side, and which remained in position until 4 o'clock in the afternoon and then crossed,—the pontoons being removed thereafter. The purpose for which the Suffolk campaign had been entered upon was accomplished. The soldiers and their horses had been well fed from the products of the country around, and provisions in quantity for man and beast had been secured and sent into the interior. Considering the numerous battles and skirmishes engaged in by Longstreet's men against those of their enemies,—though at times severe, but of

short duration,—the Confederates sustained comparatively slight losses. The most serious during the siege was the capture by the enemy of Stribling's Fauquier battery of six guns, which had been hurried off to the banks of the Nansemond River, without support, to engage the enemy's gunboats. While so doing, the battery was flanked by a body of Federal infantry and was, consequently and unavoidably, an easy prey.

The narration of the following incident, which transpired while we were before the town of Suffolk, will not be deemed inappropriate just here, as it was not only very daring, but very meritorious, and hence worthy to be handed down to posterity as a fair sample of Southern chivalry.

General Pickett, desirous of knowing the position and strength of our foes on his front, called upon Capt. Wm. H. Fowle, Co. H, Seventeenth Virginia Infantry, then engaged on picket duty, to procure for him for this work the services of a good, reliable scout. Sergt. J. P. Jordan, of that company, because of his success on former occasions, was summoned, and General Pickett gave him the following instructions:

"You will proceed in the direction of Suffolk, and, if practicable, ascertain the location of the enemy's camp, his strength, and so on; but do not arouse his suspicions or disturb him, as I want him kept quiet until my plans are matured."

Selecting three of his comrades, each distinguished for his bravery and unimpeachable reliability, to accompany him, Jordan pushed forward into the forest, taking the direction of the Federal lines. Creeping along single file, with the utmost caution, they were not long in striking the almost impenetrable swamp, which is thickly studded with undergrowth; and through this they pursued their way until they reckoned themselves in the neighborhood of the enemy's line. Our sergeant raised himself at this point and upon looking about him closely, made a startling discovery. As he says:

"I found that I had, unobserved, passed the enemy's pickets, posted not over fifteen paces on either side of me, and was a short distance in their rear."

Surrounded by enemies; and bound by necessity to move without attracting attention, the little band was now in such a position that only unshrinking nerve could ensure them success in their undertaking.

We may rest assured that the utmost caution was observed,—not a twig broken the noise of which would awaken suspicion,—

as the brave soldiers moved quietly on almost into the midst of the foe. As they advanced the openings in the timber were more frequent, and they could see distinctly therefrom a line of Federals in front of them busily engaged in throwing up earthworks; which rendered their nearer approach to Suffolk impracticable. Then was the moment of intense importance to them,—a moment that required a master stroke if they were to be extricated from their perilous position, and placed again through the line of pickets. Certain capture and probable death awaited their advance, while to retrace their steps along the path by which they had come was entirely out of the question. So, after consultation, the sergeant's suggestion that they should work their way back as near the lines as possible, without detection, was concurred in; and at once its execution was undertaken.

Proceeding cautiously, the next sight presented to their view was the enemy, posted in squads of four about twenty paces apart. Deeming this truly, so far, the climax of the situation, another council became necessary, which they held as they reclined unseen in the sheltering undergrowth. Escape to some of them seemed impossible, but our sergeant, ever prompt in facing danger, determined to make a bold effort to reach safety, before yielding to the strong pressure against them.

They were then waiting on that portion of the lines that skirted the edge of the wood, and from that point their own pickets could be seen, not more than a hundred yards beyond, quietly walking their beats, totally ignorant of the proximity and peril of their comrades, who were so anxiously watching them from the enemy's lines.

The active brain of Sergeant Jordan soon matured a plan, which he communicated to his comrades, and instructed them to follow him. These intrepid fellows sprang upon the Federal pickets, four in number, and ordered them to surrender. Without parley the pickets obeyed, throwing down their arms. They were then commanded to run for their lives, and away they dashed across the field toward the Confederate lines, our men keeping near their prisoners for protection. Not a shot was fired upon either side, and in a few minutes our men, with their prisoners, were safe.

The following special order was read to the troops of the division on dress parade, May 19, 1863.

HD. QRS. PICKETT'S DIVISION,  
May 15th, 1863.

SPECIAL ORDER No. 48.

The Major-General commanding takes pleasure in expressing his high appreciation to his command, of the gallant and meritorious conduct of Sergeant J. P. Jordan, Co. H., 17th Va.; Private John T. Mills, Co. H., 17th Va.; Private S. C. Madison, Co. F., 30th Va.; and Private Wm. Gravatt, Co. F., 30th Va., in the late siege of Suffolk.

Those gallant soldiers, being sent by their commanding officers, when on picket duty on the New Somerton Road, immediately in front of Suffolk, alone and unsustained, pierced the enemy's line of skirmishers, penetrated to within a few yards of his main line of battle, gained valuable information, and returned, bringing with them four (4) prisoners and all their arms and equipments.

It is with special pleasure that the Major-General commanding observes such acts of gallant chivalric daring among the brave men whom he commands, and while the above soldiers have, in so doing, written their own names on the roll of honor, it is hoped that their example will incite others to deeds of a similar nature. He desires that this order be published to each regiment and battalion of the Division on dress parade.

BY ORDER OF MAJ.-GENL. PICKETT,  
E. R. BAIRD, A. A. A. GENERAL.

OFF. H. BRYANT, A. A. A. GENL.  
To J. P. JORDAN, Co. H., 17TH VA. REGT.

On the 5th at an early hour the division was again in motion, and had not proceeded far when they were met with the welcome tidings, through a dispatch from General Lee to General Longstreet, of the battle and victory at Chancellorsville. The effect of this announcement upon the men was that of a powerful tonic, well-nigh annihilating every thought of physical inconvenience arising from over-exertion. We passed through Petersburg on the 8th, and went into bivouac a mile or so beyond the city; after which many of the men were allowed to return to the "Burg" and spend a portion of the night with their friends and acquaintances. It was a treat indeed after so prolonged a campaign to visit the dear old city filled with kindly hearts, and every action of the inhabitants proclaimed alumni of the college of genuine hospitality.

On the following day we moved again, this time to within six miles of Richmond. We encamped at Falling Creek, where several days were spent very pleasantly. The division left Falling Creek on the 15th, and passed through Richmond on the

morning of the 16th. The following day we arrived at our destination, which was within three miles of Hanover Junction. Here we entered upon regular camp life and resumed the regular camp drills.

#### THE CAVALRY SERVICE

While our part of Longstreet's corps was so busily occupied in the neighborhood of Suffolk important events were transpiring with the other portion of the Army of Northern Virginia.

We left Jackson's corps and two divisions of Longstreet's corps protecting the lines in front of and to the right and left of Fredericksburg. Those lines extended for not less than twenty-five miles, with two brigades of cavalry under Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, operating on the left, at the upper fords of the Rappahannock River.

A part of our cavalry that was suffering from scarcity of forage having been sent to the rear to recuperate, those remaining, though thus reduced in numbers, were kept actively employed and underwent much hard service during the spring months. Among the numerous contests with the Federal cavalry that which occurred on the 17th of March, near Kelly's Ford, was the most important and is worthy of record.

Brigadier-General Averell, in command of a division, crossed the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford, notwithstanding the stubborn resistance made by the Confederate sharpshooters. About 12 o'clock, he moved his columns forward in quest of Gen. Fitz Lee's camp, but found in lieu thereof a line of troopers ready for battle. Having formed his brigade in line, he promptly proceeded to wipe out the foe in his front. After a prolonged conflict, amidst charging and counter-charging, the following extract from the report of General Averell gives his version of the result.

It was 5:30 p. m., and it was necessary to advance my cavalry upon their intrenched positions, to make a direct and desperate attack, or to withdraw across the river. Either operation would be attended with imminent hazard. My horses were very much exhausted. We had been successful thus far. I deemed it proper to withdraw.

Gen. Fitz Lee's report tells us:

Their total advance was 2 miles from the ford. At that time my artillery arrived, and they were driven back, recrossing the river about 7:30 p. m., with us in close pursuit.

My whole command acted nobly ; sabres were frequently crossed and fences charged up to, the leading men dismounting and pulling them down, under a heavy fire of canister, grape, and carbine balls. Had I my command in the order it arrived in this enervating section of the country, and not weakened by the absence of four squadrons on picket, guarding a line stretching from Griffinsburg, on the Sperryville Turnpike, to Richard's Ford, and by the large number of horses unfit for duty by exposure to severe winter, with a very limited supply of forage, I feel confident the defeat of the enemy would have been changed into a disorderly rout, and the whole brigade resupplied with horses, saddles, and bridles.



## CHAPTER XXVII

THE BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE. MAY 1-4, 1863

THE Federal army had been reorganized under the superintendence of General Hooker, well known in history as "Fighting Joe," who had succeeded to the command when General Burnside was removed. It was composed of seven magnificently equipped corps, each under the generalship of the best fighting material in the Federal army, 400 pieces of artillery, and about 12,000 cavalry.

On the first day of May, 1863, that beautifully caparisoned "Grand Army" numbered 132,000 effective men of all arms.<sup>1</sup> That portion of our army which confronted this great host on this same first of May, numbered less than 46,000 men of all arms. Notwithstanding this disparity, the spirit of the Confederates remained unbroken, and the opportunity, for which these comparatively few waited, found them ready for the fray. The time came and the battle was fought—a battle that is known in history as the Battle of Chancellorsville.

General Hooker, after carefully inspecting and studying the Confederate position, determined to attack General Lee. Making a feint with a large body of cavalry, under General Stoneman, in the direction of our communications with Richmond, and sending a considerable body of infantry under General Sedgwick to the heights below Fredericksburg, as an additional mask to his plans, he then moved the bulk of his army across the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers, turned our left, and took possession of a strong point at a farmhouse known as Chancellorsville. This place is located about ten miles west of Fredericksburg, and, at that period, was surrounded by a dense thicket of undergrowth extending for miles on all sides, and intersected here and there by roads converging at or near the farmhouse. General Lee, having obtained information of his opponent's various movements, had issued orders to General Jackson for the assembling of his corps near Fredericksburg,

<sup>1</sup> *Swinton.*

while Anderson's division, supported by the cavalry, confronted General Hooker. As was not unusual for General Lee, he quietly awaited the development of the enemy's plans, so far as to enable him to arrange with an eye to their frustration whenever it was necessary.

General Sedgwick's forces crossed the Rappahannock River on the 29th, below the town, but they made no aggressive demonstrations against our lines, which were at that time held by General Early's division. On the first day of May, while our commander was noting the antagonist's position and analyzing the different demonstrations, information was brought to him from the left that the enemy was advancing. Feeling well assured now that the left was the point upon which the clash of arms was to turn, General McLaws was ordered to the support of General Anderson.

The cannon's boom was already lending its charm to the warrior's ear; General Jackson, with three divisions, quickly followed McLaws; General Early's command, composed of some nine or ten thousand troops, remained in front of General Sedgwick to watch that Federal leader's movements, and to obstruct his further advance. Hooker's reconnoitering party, on the left, had been met by McLaws and Anderson, and quite a brisk contest ensued.

Some of Jackson's men took part in this fight later in the afternoon, and before night the Federals were pushed back and retired into their lines.

The point occupied by the enemy was so strong, and his numerical strength so far in excess of ours, that General Lee, after a close inspection of his lines and the receipt of necessary information from the citizens of the neighborhood, decided to make a bold stroke to turn his position. To carry out this piece of strategy, General Jackson was chosen to lead the attack. He moved away at dawn of the second of May with his own corps, consisting of something over 20,000 men, and Stuart's cavalry as a support. Making a circuit, he marched to the right and rear of the Federal army, to a point on the road from Orange Court House, several miles in the rear of Chancellorsville. This greatest of all flank movements was an absolutely perfect success; for that flank was entirely unguarded, and after the desired arrangements for the attack had been completed and Jackson's veterans were in full readiness for the advance, perfect quietude reigned throughout his camps; his soldiers being engaged in

their ordinary camp duties, with arms stacked and everything apparently in a state of inoffensive security.

Somewhere about 6 o'clock in the evening, the "Stonewall" dogs of war were let loose upon the unsuspecting Federals, and went at them with a will. Howard's command, the first troops upon whom they came, were panic-stricken, and, in their flight, spread the panic among the other troops through whom they passed. Close upon the heels of the fugitives our veterans followed, peppering them with their musketry as they ran, until line after line had been driven far back on the way to Chancellorsville, and darkness arrested further pursuit. This was the most dearly bought victory that our soldiers ever won, as it resulted in the death of Lieut.-Gen. Thomas J. Jackson, the greatest of all earth's Christian heroes.

At the close of the day's battle, and soon after 9 o'clock, General Jackson rode forward, accompanied by several others, to examine the enemy's position. All about was quiet. After riding several hundred yards to the front the party halted to listen, and while so doing, without warning, a volley of musketry was fired into them. They had been mistaken for enemies by our own men. Some of the escort fell, and General Jackson wheeled his horse into the woods, probably to avoid another volley. This movement, however, brought him almost in contact with some of his own men, and he was again fired on and wounded in three places. His frightened horse carried him to the rear into his own lines, where he was assisted in dismounting and then borne from the field. His last order was received by General Pender, who expressed, in Jackson's presence, some doubt of the possibility of his being able to hold his position. At this, the great hero's eyes flashed and he responded:

"You *must* hold your ground, General Pender! You *must* hold your ground, sir!"

While the veterans of General Jackson were rendering such good service on the right and rear of our foes, the divisions of McLaws and Anderson, who were holding the lines in front of Hooker, as soon as the guns on the left became audible, pressed forward to the attack, in order to prevent the enemy from reënforcing his right. The movement, supported by several of our batteries, which played a conspicuous part in the drama, was well executed. Darkness forced a close to the contest, in which our men displayed their usual courage, charging up to within a short distance of the enemy's breastworks.

By the sorrowful calamity that had befallen General Jackson, and the disabling wounds of Gen. A. P. Hill, the command of the corps devolved upon Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, the senior officer on the ground; and never were duties more faithfully performed.

On the third of May, early in the morning, the attack was renewed by our cavalry chieftain. The position of the enemy had been greatly strengthened during the night—earthworks having been thrown up, and his artillery posted in such a way as to well-nigh cover his entire front. Notwithstanding these obstructions, our men, well worthy of so gallant a leader, vigorously pressed forward in the face of a terrific storm of shot and canister, accompanied by the thunder and hail of musketry, and carried the first line of breastworks. With renewed vim they rushed on and on, until the enemy was forced to vacate the second line and to retire in panic to the rear.

The men of McLaws' and Anderson's divisions, in front, had moved forward also, and were hotly engaged. The breastworks of the Federals were extensive and of great strength, and behind these works were posted his guns, none of which, as may be seen, could be easily captured. Three separate assaults were made upon them, and though our troops fought with marvelous intrepidity, each attack was repulsed. At length our artillery, on the left, by moving forward, had secured more favorable positions in the midst of the dense growth upon that part of the field, and here they opened fire with unerring aim. All, front and left, now pressed forward with irresistible force, and drove the Federals from every fortified position; thus we were left in full possession of the sanguinary field.

Our enemies fell back toward the Rappahannock River and availed themselves of a strong line that had previously been fortified. Our men were halted, and our lines reformed; the condition of the field, with its tangled undergrowth and thicket, had necessarily somewhat scattered and intermingled the commands.

The troops under General Sedgwick, below Fredericksburg, had in the meantime withdrawn from in front of General Early, and moved further up the river; a bridge had been thrown across at or near the town over which they had passed and had taken possession. Our lines at that point were manned by the brigade of General Barksdale, who was afterwards reënforced by General Hayes' brigade; and upon this line the Federals

moved out and made an attack, which was repulsed. Soon after this they moved up on the river road above the town, but were driven back by Generals Hayes and Wilcox, the latter having marched forward and arrived in time to participate.

Two assaults were then made upon Marye's Hill, but they were most gallantly repulsed by the artillery and the small command under Barksdale.

Later in the day three heavy columns, wearing the blue, advanced and attacked with all their might the entire Confederate line. On the right and left these were hurled back, with heavy loss; but that portion of our line in front of Marye's Hill, held by a small force—a force hardly one-tenth of their assailant's number—was carried after a brave resistance, our side losing eight pieces of artillery.

The Confederates retired slowly down the Telegraph Road and took position at Salem Church, five miles from Fredericksburg. We were contending against one corps and a part of another of the Federals, with not over 9000 men with which to obstruct their passage.

Sedgwick then began his forward march toward Chancellorsville, and being in the rear of our army, it was necessary to drive him back. With this purpose in view, the division of McLaws, consisting of four brigades, was detached from in front of Chancellorsville, and sent to the support of General Early. He arrived early in the evening and found our troops in line of battle, with the enemy in strong force in front. After the disposal of his brigades as he deemed best, under a heavy artillery fire, the lines were ready for attack; and soon it came.

The enemy advanced a large force in three lines, and, after severe combat, was repulsed with heavy loss. The second advance soon after approached; but under so galling a fire, that, squirming under it, the men made but a slight assault and fled in disorder from the field, having lost heavily. For nearly a mile they were pursued, and it was nightfall when our troops halted and reformed, after which they withdrew to their former position, without any attempt on the part of the enemy to follow them.

On the morning of the fourth of May General Early advanced his troops and recaptured the lines in the vicinity of Marye's Hill, thus placing himself in the rear of the enemy's left. Upon the same morning the division of General Anderson was marched out from in front of Chancellorsville, to act as

a support to the troops in front of Sedgwick, and about an hour before sundown, on the afternoon of the same day, the combined forces of the Confederates—Early on the right, Anderson on the left, and McLaws in the center—moved forward and drove our antagonists toward the Rappahannock; and when darkness settled upon the field they were crossing the river. When daylight arrived on the fifth Fredericksburg had been evacuated, and not a Federal was visible on our side of the stream, except the dead, a large number of the wounded, and a multitude that had been captured.

In the course of that day the divisions of Generals Anderson and McLaws were returned to Chancellorsville. General Lee, preparatory to giving General Hooker another notice of his presence, pushed forward his skirmishers on the morning of the sixth to ascertain his antagonist's exact locality. This resulted in the disclosure that on the night previous, during a heavy storm, Hooker and his followers had crossed the river and were safely harbored beyond the reach of the projected blow.

A detachment of the army was left as a guard, while our wounded were being attended to, and the dead buried, while the remainder of the troops resumed their former position near Fredericksburg. Thus terminated one of the greatest battles of the Great War, a battle in which the enemy had not only been repulsed at several different points, but, by a rapid flank movement on his right, under the unwavering guardianship of the great "Stonewall," his entire defeat had been effected with immense loss to his command, causing him to withdraw from the field.

The casualties, from April 29 to May 4, were:

Union, 17,287; Confederate, 12,764.<sup>1</sup>

The following extracts from the official reports of general officers, taken from the "War Records," refer to the fighting on the 1st of May.

General Lee says:

At 11 a. m. the troops moved forward upon the Plank and Old Turnpike roads, Anderson, with the brigades of Wright and Posey, leading on the former; McLaws, with his three brigades, preceded by Mahone's, on the latter. Generals Wilcox and Perry, of Anderson's division, coöperated with McLaws. Jackson's troops followed Anderson on the Plank road. Colonel Alexander's battalion of artillery accompanied the advance. The enemy was soon encountered

<sup>1</sup> *War Records.*

on both roads, and heavy skirmishing with infantry and artillery ensued, our troops pressing steadily forward. A strong attack upon General McLaws was repulsed with spirit by Semmes' brigade, and General Wright, by direction of General Anderson, diverging to the left of the Plank road, marched by way of the unfinished railroad from Fredericksburg to Gordonsville, and turned the enemy's right. His whole line thereupon retreated rapidly, vigorously pursued by our own troops until they arrived within about 1 mile of Chancellorsville. Here the enemy had assumed a position of great natural strength, surrounded on all sides by a dense forest filled with a tangled undergrowth, in the midst of which breastworks of logs had been constructed, with trees felled in front, so as to form an almost impenetrable abatis. His artillery swept the few narrow roads by which his position could be approached from the front, and commanded the adjacent woods. The left of his line extended from Chancellorsville toward the Rappahannock, covering the Bark Mill Ford, where he communicated with the north bank of the river by a pontoon bridge. His right stretched westward along the Germanna Ford Road more than 2 miles. Darkness was approaching before the strength and extent of his line could be ascertained, and as the nature of the country rendered it hazardous to attack by night, our troops were halted and formed in line of battle in front of Chancellorsville, at right angles to the Plank road, extending on the right to the Mine road and to the left in the direction of the Catherine Furnace.

Brig.-Gen. William Mahone says:

The next day (Friday, May 1), this brigade led on the turnpike road in the general advance of our forces, and very shortly engaged the enemy under General Sykes, when we had quite a brisk little engagement,—artillery and infantry,—Major-General McLaws commanding. The enemy (United States Regulars, many of whom we captured) was promptly repulsed, and our line of battle, now formed, was moved rapidly forward to a point on the Turnpike south of Chancellorsville about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles, known as McGee's. This brigade continued here with Major-General McLaw's force, confronting the enemy's line of battle in that quarter, until the next day, when it was transferred, and occupied our front line, immediately on the left of the Plank road.

Of this affair, General Sykes, of the United States Army, says:

By sharp fighting we soon recovered the lost ground, drove in the enemy's pickets, and took possession of a crest just in front of a heavy forest, and in range of some rifle-pits or breastworks on

our left. Weed's battery (Company I, Fifth Artillery), superintended by that officer, and immediately commanded by Lieutenant Watson, of the same regiment, crowned the crest, and opened an effective cannonade, and was supported by a part of my third brigade, under Colonel O'Rorke, One Hundred and Fortieth New York Volunteers. The enemy held the road in front with infantry and two guns, threw a considerable force in the breastworks, and for a couple of hours maneuvered to turn both my flanks. His force was so superior to my own that he partially outflanked me right and left. I threw the First Brigade (Regulars), under General Ayers, rapidly to the left, and six companies of the One Hundred and Forty-sixth New York Volunteers, Lieutenant-Colonel Jenkins, to the right: Colonel Burbank held the front. The enemy checked my advance by the main road, and the disposition to secure my flanks kept the enemy quiet; but as both of these flanks rested on a dense growth of forest, and as I was completely isolated from the rest of the army, I felt that my rear could be gained by a determined movement of the enemy under cover of the forest. Griffin was far to my left, Slocum far to my right, the enemy in front and between me and both those officers. In this situation, without support, my position was critical; still, I determined to hold it as long as possible. At this period, General Warren, chief engineer, Army of the Potomac, who had accompanied me, rode to the major-general commanding the army, to explain the state of affairs, and, on his return, I was directed to retire in the direction of Chancellorsville.

The following extracts of reports give accounts of the second day's battle, May 2.

General Lee says:

It was evident that a direct attack upon the enemy would be attended with great difficulty and loss, in view of the strength of his position and his superiority of numbers. It was, therefore, resolved to endeavor to turn his right flank and gain his rear, having a force in front to hold him in check and conceal the movement. The execution of this plan was intrusted to Lieutenant-General Jackson, with his three divisions. The commands of Generals McLaws and Anderson, with the exception of Wilcox's brigade, which during the night had been ordered back to Bank's Ford, remained in front of the enemy.

Early on the morning of the 2nd, General Jackson marched by the Furnace and Brook roads, his movement being effectually covered by Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry, under General Stuart in person.

After a long and fatiguing march, General Jackson's leading division, under General Rodes, reached the old turnpike, about 3



miles in rear of Chancellorsville, at 4 p. m. As the different divisions arrived, they were formed at right angles to the road,—Rodes in front, Trimble's division, under Brigadier-General [R. S.] Colston, in the second, and A. P. Hill's in the third, line.

At 6 p. m. the advance was ordered. The enemy were taken by surprise, and fled after a brief resistance. General Rodes' men pushed forward with great vigor and enthusiasm, followed closely by the second and third lines. Position after position was carried, the guns captured, and every effort of the enemy to rally defeated by the impetuous rush of our troops. In the ardor of pursuit through the thick and tangled woods, the first and second lines at last became mingled, and moved on together as one. The enemy made a stand at a line of breastworks across the road, at the house of Meizie Chancellor, but the troops of Rodes and Colston dashed over the intrenchments together, and continued until our advance was arrested by the abatis in front of the line of works near the central position at Chancellorsville. It was now dark, and General Jackson ordered the third line, under General [A. P.] Hill, to advance to the front, and relieve the troops of Rodes and Colston, who were completely blended and in so much disorder, from their rapid advance through intricate woods and over broken ground, that it was necessary to re-form them. As Hill's men moved forward, General Jackson, with his staff and escort, returning from the extreme front, met his skirmishers advancing, and in the obscurity of the night were mistaken for the enemy and fired upon. Captain [I. K.] Boswell, chief engineer of the corps, and several others were killed and a number wounded. General Jackson himself received a severe injury, and was borne from the field. The command devolved upon Major-General Hill, whose division, under General Heth, was advanced to the line of intrenchments which had been reached by Rodes and Colston. A furious fire of artillery was opened upon them by the enemy, under cover of which his infantry advanced to the attack. They were handsomely repulsed by the Fifty-fifth Virginia Regiment, under Colonel [Francis] Mallory, who was killed while bravely leading his men. General Hill was soon afterwards disabled, and Major-General Stuart, who had been directed by General Jackson to seize the road to Ely's Ford, in rear of the enemy, was sent for to take command. At this time the right of Hill's division was attacked by the column of the enemy already mentioned as having penetrated to the furnace, which had been recalled to Chancellorsville to avoid being cut off by the advance of Jackson. This attack was gallantly met and repulsed by the Eighteenth and Twenty-eighth and a portion of the Thirty-third North Carolina Regiments, Lane's brigade.

Upon General Stuart's arrival, soon afterward, the command was turned over to him by General Hill. He immediately pro-

ceeded to reconnoiter the ground and make himself acquainted with the disposition of the troops. The darkness of the night and the difficulty of moving through the woods and the undergrowth rendered it advisable to defer further operations until morning, and the troops rested on their arms in line of battle.

As soon as the sound of cannon gave notice of Jackson's attack on the enemy's right, our troops in front of Chancellorsville were ordered to press him strongly on the left, to prevent reinforcements being sent to the point assailed. They were directed not to attack in force unless a favorable opportunity should present itself, and, while continuing to cover the roads leading from their respective positions toward Chancellorsville, to incline to the left so as to connect with Jackson's right as he closed in upon the center. These orders were well executed, our own troops advancing up to the enemy's intrenchments, while several batteries played with good effect upon his lines until prevented by the increasing darkness.

Gen. A. P. Hill reports:

The attack was made about 6 p. m., Rodes' division and some artillery in advance, Colston and Hill supporting. The attack of Rodes was made with great energy. The enemy were driven for three miles and into his works at Chancellorsville, with the loss of ten pieces of artillery and many prisoners. This was about 9 p. m., and General Jackson directed General Hill to take charge of the pursuit. While Lane's brigade was forming its lines for advance and throwing out its skirmishers, General Jackson was wounded. The enemy then made an attempt to retake their rifle-pits immediately fronting Chancellorsville, but were handsomely driven back by Colonel [Francis] Mallory, Fifty-fifth Virginia, Heth's brigade. The enemy during this time had concentrated a most terrible fire of artillery on the head of Hill's division from thirty-two pieces of artillery. General Hill was disabled during this fire.

Gen. R. E. Rodes says:

At once the line of battle rushed forward with a yell, and Doles at this moment debouched from the woods and encountered a force of the enemy and a battery of two guns intrenched. Detaching two regiments to flank the position, he charged without halting, sweeping everything before him, and pressing on to Tally's, gallantly carried the works there and captured five guns by a similar flank movement of a portion of his command. So complete was the success of the whole maneuver, and such was the surprise of the enemy, that scarcely any organized resistance was met with after the first volley was fired. They fled in the wildest confusion, leaving the field

strewn with arms, accoutrements, clothing, caissons, and field-pieces in every direction.

General Howard, commanding Eleventh Corps, Federal army, says :

I sent my chief of staff to the front when firing was heard. General Schurz, who was with me, left at once to take command of his line. It was not three minutes before I followed. When I reached General Schurz's command, I saw that the enemy had enveloped my right, and that the First Division was giving way. I first tried to change the front of the deployed regiments. I next directed the artillery where to go ; then formed a line by deploying some of the reserve regiments near the church. By this time the whole front on the north of the Plank Road had given way. Colonel Buschbeck's brigade was faced about, and lying on the other side of the rifle-pit embankment, held on with praiseworthy firmness. A part of General Schimmelfennig's and a part of General Krzyzanowski's brigades moved gradually back to the north of the Plank Road and kept up their fire. At the center and near the Plank Road there was a blind panic and great confusion. By the assistance of my staff and some other officers, one of whom was Colonel Dickinson, of General Hooker's staff, the rout was considerably checked, and all the artillery, except eight pieces, withdrawn.

Gen. Charles Devens, Jr., says :

As it has been suggested that the First Division was to some extent surprised, I deem it my duty to say that in riding down the entire line I found no officers or men out of their assigned positions, but all prepared to meet the attack. The line of skirmishers along the front of both brigades behaved with great resolution, keeping the enemy back as long as they could be expected to resist so fierce an attack by so overwhelming a force ; in fact, they emerged from the woods at the right of the Second Brigade at the same time with the attacking force. From the great extent of the enemy's line, as soon as it came in contact with ours, we were completely outflanked on the right, and the fire began to be felt in the rear of the Second Brigade, while the skirmishers of the enemy were finding their way to the rear of and firing on the First Brigade, commanded by Colonel van Gilsa. I had at this time a full view of that portion of the enemy's line which was deployed upon the right, or southern, side of the road ; and, later, of that which appeared on the left or northern side. The formation of the enemy, as well as could be seen in the smoke and confusion of the battle (and I think I distinguished it accurately), was that of a line of regiments in double column, closed in mass or at half distance, numbering from 25,000 to 30,000 men.

Gen. A. von Steinwehr says:

The attack of the enemy was very powerful. They emerged in close columns from the woods, and had thrown the First and Third Divisions, which retired toward Chancellorsville, into great confusion. Colonel Buschbeck succeeded in checking the progress of the enemy, and I directed him to hold his position as long as possible.

The men fought with great determination and courage. Soon, however, the enemy gained both wings of the brigade, and the enfilading fire, which was now opened upon this small force, and which killed and wounded nearly one-third of its whole strength, soon forced it to retire.

Of the battle on Sunday (May 3), the author quotes from the following accounts:

General Lee's, in which he says:

Early on the morning of the third, General Stuart renewed the attack upon the enemy, who had strengthened his right during the night with additional breastworks, while a large number of guns, protected by intrenchments, were posted so as to sweep the woods through which our troops had to advance. Hill's division was in front, with Colston in the second line and Rodes in the third. The second and third lines soon advanced to the support of the first, and the whole became hotly engaged. The breastworks at which the attack was suspended the preceding evening were carried by assault under a terrible fire of musketry and artillery. In rear of these breastworks was a barricade, from which the enemy was quickly driven. The troops on the left of the Plank Road, pressing through the woods, attacked and broke the next line, while those on the right bravely assailed the extensive earthworks, behind which the enemy's artillery was posted. Three times were these works carried, and as often were the brave assailants compelled to abandon them,—twice by the retirement of the troops on their left, who fell back after a gallant struggle with superior numbers, and once by a movement of the enemy on their right, caused by the advance of General Anderson. The left, being reënforced, finally succeeded in driving back the enemy, and the artillery under Lieutenant-Colonels [T. H.] Carter and [H. P.] Jones being thrown forward to occupy favorable positions secured by the advance of the infantry, began to play with great precision and effect. Anderson, in the meantime, pressed gallantly forward directly upon Chancellorsville, his right resting upon the Plank road and his left extending around toward the furnace, while McLaws made a strong demonstration to the right of the road. As the troops advancing upon the enemy's front and right converged upon his central position, Anderson effected a junc-

ture with Jackson's corps, and the whole line pressed irresistibly on. The enemy was driven from all his fortified positions, with heavy loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, and retreated toward the Rappahannock. By 10 a. m. we were in full possession of the field.

Gen. Jeb Stuart says :

At early dawn Trimble's division composed the second line and Rodes' division the third. The latter had his rations on the spot, and, as his men were entirely without food, was extremely anxious to issue. I was disposed to wait a short time for this purpose; but when, as preliminary to the attack, I ordered the right of the first line to swing around and come perpendicular to the road, the order was misunderstood for an order to attack, and that part of the line became engaged. I ordered the whole line to advance and the second and third lines to follow. As the sun lifted the mist that shrouded the field it was discovered that the ridge on the extreme right was a fine position for concentrating the artillery. I immediately ordered thirty pieces to that point, and, under the happy effects of the battalion system, it was done quickly. The effect of this fire upon the enemy's batteries was superb.

In the meantime the enemy was pressing our left with infantry, and all the reënforcements I could obtain were sent there. Colquitt's brigade, of Trimble's division, ordered first to the right, was directed to the left to support Pender. Overson's brigade of the second line was also engaged there, and the three lines were more or less merged into one line of battle, and reported hard pressed. Urgent requests were sent for reënforcements, and notices that the troops were out of ammunition, etc. I ordered that the ground must be held at all hazards; if necessary, with the bayonet. About this time also our right connected with Anderson's left, relieving all anxiety on the subject. I was now anxious to mass infantry on the left, to push the enemy there, and sent every available regiment to that point.

About 8 a. m. the works of the enemy directly in front of our right were stormed, but the enemy's forces retiring from the line facing Anderson, which our batteries enfiladed, caused our troops to abandon these works, the enemy coming in their rear. It was stormed a second time, when I discovered the enemy making a flank movement to the left of the road, for the purpose of dislodging our forces, and hastened to change the front of a portion of our line to meet this attack; but the shortness of the time and the deafening roar of artillery prevented the execution of this movement, and our line again retired. The third time it was taken, I made disposition of a portion of Ramseur's brigade to protect the left flank. Artillery was pushed forward to the crest, sharpshooters were posted in

a house in advance, and in a few moments Chancellorsville was ours (10 a. m.). The enemy retired toward Ely's Ford, the road to United States Ford branching one-half mile west of Chancellorsville.

General Couch, United States Army, says:

At 5 a. m., Sunday, the 3rd, the battle opened with great fury. In the course of the morning the corps on my right was pushed in so as to enable the enemy to concentrate their artillery fire on Chancellorsville with great effect. Major-General French moved into the forest on the right of the Plank Road, looking west: Carroll's brigade in front. He drove the enemy, taking about 300 prisoners and recapturing a regiment of one of the corps in the hands of the rebels. Brigadier-General Caldwell's Brigade, of Hancock's division, also went in creditably. General Hay's brigade was severely engaged, that fine officer being wounded and taken prisoner. Meagher, with his brigade that had been covering a point to the right and rear of our whole line, was ordered up.

By 9 a. m. the only point contested by the two armies was the salient, Chancellorsville. On our side the woods in front were held by a part of the Twelfth Corps, under Geary; the open ground by a few regiments of Hancock's division and about 18 pieces of artillery. The enemy succeeded in planting their batteries, most of them well covered, to the west, on our right; to the east, on our left, and southerly, on our front, concentrating their fire on this point with great accuracy and terrible execution.

The enemy, who had threatened to advance, was soon dispersed by the fire of the artillery. He, however, immediately planted several batteries in the open plain, 900 yards to my front, and, with the batteries on the Fredericksburg Road, immediately in my rear, and those near the Plank Road to my left, opened a tremendous fire upon my lines.

An infantry assault was made at the same time on General Geary's command of the Twelfth Corps, on my left; success alternating from one side to the other, my artillery assisting my forces, until finally that command was forced to quit its ground and retire from the field. Its resistance was stern, but unsuccessful.

I was now fighting in opposite directions, one line facing toward Fredericksburg, the other toward Gordonsville, these two lines being about half a mile apart. Projectiles from the enemy's artillery, from the front and rear, passed over both lines, while other pieces, in different positions, enfiladed both. Notwithstanding that my flank, which had been covered by General Geary, was entirely exposed, our fourteen pieces of artillery prevented him from advancing, although his battle-flags were within a few hundred yards of us. The troops, however, suffered very heavy losses from the enemy's artil-

lery. The Chancellor house, which was being used as a hospital, was fired by shells. With a detail from the Second Delaware, of Brooke's command, under direction of Lieut. W P Wilson, of my staff, the wounded were removed from within and around the building.

Of the battles at Marye's Hill and Salem Church, on the 3d and 4th, we quote from the "War Records" as follows.

Gen. J. A. Early says:

About light on next morning (Sunday, the 3rd) I received information from General Barksdale that the enemy had thrown a bridge across at Fredericksburg, and I immediately sent Hay's brigade from the right to his support. In a short time the enemy commenced making demonstrations from the mouth of Deep Run and Fredericksburg. All his efforts to attack the left of my line were thwarted, and one attack on Marye's Hill was repulsed. The enemy, however, sent a flag of truce to Colonel [Thomas M.] Griffin, of the Eighteenth Mississippi Regiment, who occupied the works at the foot of Marye's Hill with his own and the Twenty-first Mississippi Regiment, which was received by him improperly; and it had barely returned before heavy columns were advanced against the position, and the trenches were carried and the hill taken, a large portion of the Eighteenth Mississippi Regiment and a part of the Twenty-first being taken prisoners, and a company of the Washington Artillery, with its guns, were captured. After this the artillery on Lee's Hill and the rest of Barksdale's infantry, with one of Hay's regiments, fell back on the Telegraph Road; Hays, with the remainder, being compelled to fall back up the Plank Road, as he was on the left. Having received information, I hastened up, and succeeded in halting the artillery and infantry, and checking the advance of the enemy, and had the brigades on the right thrown back into the second line; and upon the arrival of Hay's brigade, which came round from the Plank road, and three regiments of Gordon's, which had been sent for as soon as I heard of the disaster, a line was formed across the Telegraph Road at Cox's House, about 2 miles back of Lee's Hill.

Having received information late in the day that McLaws was moving down, and that the enemy, who had passed heavy columns up the Plank Road through Fredericksburg, was to be attacked by his forces and mine in connection, I concentrated all my force at Cox's house, which was not accomplished until after night.

General Lee says:

The success of the enemy [the capture of Marye's Hill] enabled him to threaten our communications by moving down the Telegraph

Road, or to come upon our rear at Chancellorsville by the Plank Road. He at first advanced on the former, but was checked by General Early, who had halted the commands of Barksdale and Hays, with the artillery, about 2 miles from Marye's Hill, and reënforced them with three regiments of Gordon's brigade. The enemy then began to advance up the Plank Road, his progress being gallantly disputed by the brigade of General Wilcox, who had moved from Bank's Ford as rapidly as possible to the assistance of General Barksdale, but arrived too late to take part in the action. General Wilcox fell back slowly until he reached Salem Church, on the Plank Road, about 5 miles from Fredericksburg.

Information of the state of affairs in our rear having reached Chancellorsville, as already stated, General McLaws, with his three brigades and one of General Anderson's [Mahone's], was ordered to reënforce General Wilcox. He arrived at Salem Church early in the afternoon, where he found General Wilcox in line of battle, with a large force of the enemy,—consisting, as was reported, of one army corps and part of another, under Major-General Sedgwick,—in his front. The brigades of Kershaw and Wofford were placed on the right of Wilcox, those of Semmes and Mahone on his left. The enemy's artillery played vigorously upon our position for some time, when his infantry advanced in three strong lines, the attack being directed mainly against General Wilcox, but partially involving the brigades on his left. The assault was met with the utmost firmness, and after a fierce struggle the first line was repulsed, with great slaughter. The second then came forward, but immediately broke under the close and deadly fire which it encountered, and the whole mass fled in confusion to the rear. They were pursued by the brigades of Wilcox and Semmes, which advanced nearly a mile, when they were halted to re-form in the presence of the enemy's reserve, which now appeared in large force. It being quite dark, General Wilcox deemed it imprudent to push the attack with his small numbers, and retired to his original position, the enemy making no attempt to follow.

The next morning General Early advanced along the Telegraph Road, and recaptured Marye's and the adjacent hills without difficulty, thus gaining the rear of the enemy's left. He then proposed to General McLaws that a simultaneous attack should be made by their respective commands, but the latter officer not deeming his force adequate to assail the enemy in front, the proposition was not carried into effect.

In the meantime the enemy had so strengthened his position near Chancellorsville that it was deemed inexpedient to assail it with less than our whole force, which could not be concentrated until we were relieved from the danger that menaced our rear. It was accordingly resolved still further to reënforce the troops in



front of General Sedgwick in order, if possible, to drive him across the Rappahannock.

Accordingly, on the 4th, General Anderson was directed to proceed with his remaining three brigades to join General McLaws, the three divisions of Jackson's corps holding our position at Chancellorsville. Anderson reached Salem Church about noon, and was directed to gain the left flank of the enemy and effect a junction with Early. McLaws' troops were disposed as on the previous day, with orders to hold the enemy in front, and to push forward his right brigades as soon as the advance of Anderson and Early should be perceived, so as to connect with them and complete the continuity of our line. Some delay occurred in getting the troops into position, owing to the broken and irregular nature of the ground and the difficulty of ascertaining the disposition of the enemy's forces. The attack did not begin until 6 p. m., when Anderson and Early moved forward and drove General Sedgwick's troops rapidly before them across the Rappahannock. The speedy approach of darkness prevented General McLaws from perceiving the success of the attack until the enemy began to recross the river a short distance below Bank's Ford, where he had laid one of his pontoon bridges. His right brigades, under Kershaw and Wofford, advanced through the woods in the direction of the firing, but the retreat was so rapid that they could only join in the pursuit. A dense fog settled over the field, increasing the obscurity, and rendering great caution necessary to avoid collision between our own troops. Their movements were consequently slow. General Wilcox, with Kershaw's brigade and two regiments of his own, accompanied by a battery, proceeded nearly to the river, capturing a number of prisoners and inflicting great damage upon the enemy.

The next morning it was found that General Sedgwick had made good his escape and removed his bridges.

#### "STONEWALL" JACKSON

On the 10th day of May, 1863, at the residence of Mr. Chandler, near Guinea's Station, this prodigy of valor—of energetic skill founded upon Christian fidelity—passed from his earthly labors in obedience to the Higher Call. Language furnishes no synonym descriptive of the intensity of sorrow that swelled all Southern hearts when this death-knell sounded and bore a funeral pall to every household.

True in his adherence to the King of kings, he had gone forth in battle with heart uplifted in prayer for guidance, and his arm was nerved thereby, until his mission was ended and his work was done. Having won the hearts of all classes in the

Confederacy—both soldier and civilian—he had seemed to the multitude to bear an almost supernatural life.

On the 11th his remains were conveyed to Richmond. Upon their arrival there was a general suspension of all business, and all places of commerce were closed.

"Stonewall" Jackson's body was embalmed; then it was taken to the Governor's Mansion, where it remained until the following day, when it was removed to be laid in state in the Hall of Representatives. Here, throughout the day and until night had closed in, came a living stream of mourning ones, for a look—to be cherished through all time—into the calm face of him whose well-fought battles were over, but whose memory would ever remain more than dear.

On the 13th of May, 1863, his body was carried to Lexington, in Rockbridge County, Virginia, and there interred. The funeral escort from the Confederate Capitol to the depot was composed of two regiments of Pickett's division, a battery of artillery, and a detachment of cavalry, while a long procession of citizens, preceded by President Davis and staff, followed the soldiery.

Sleeping, sleeping 'neath the shadows  
Of Virginia's mountain peaks,  
Where the "Valley" streams are flowing,  
Where the aged oaks are showing  
That the tempest often speaks,—  
Rests the mortal part of Jackson  
Till the Easter morning breaks.

Waiting, waiting for the coming  
Of our Father's final call,  
Lies this cherished dust in keeping,  
While our hearts are full and weeping  
As remembrance weaves its pall.  
God gave unto us our Jackson  
As example to us all.

Fragrant, fragrant o'er the grave-sod  
Blooms the yellow mountain rose;  
There God's choristers are singing,  
And the rippling water's ringing  
Forth the echoes, as it flows  
Near the earthly rest of Jackson  
Until all Time's cycles close.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

THE SPRING CAMPAIGN. JUNE, 1863

PASSING onward in our review of the occurrences of that month of May, we will find the 28th noted as the day on which was held the gubernatorial election and that of other State officials. The Virginia soldiers in camp promptly voted for the nominees of their respective districts, and a lively canvass took place.

The army having been reorganized during the month, the infantry was divided into three corps, of three divisions each, under the command of Lieutenant-Generals Longstreet, A. P. Hill, and Ewell, each of whom—it is a great pleasure to the writer to recall—had been brigadier-general at the head of his old brigade (Kemper's).

The Army of Northern Virginia at that period was in as good condition and was as well disciplined as at any point of time upon its record. The troops were enthusiastically in earnest; the victories so unquestionably gained over the hosts of General Joe Hooker had buoyed their spirits to such an extent as to yield inspiration so fervent that they deemed themselves well-nigh invincible. Their days of raw recruitism were of the by-gones, and the extremities through which they had passed on many a hard-fought battlefield had marked each man a hero. They had enlisted for the war, enlisted for their country's sake, in full conviction of the righteousness of their cause, willing, if need be, to die in its harness.

The return of the divisions of Generals Pickett and Hood, three brigades of cavalry that had been on detached service, and numbers of convalescents who had recovered from wounds and other sickness, had increased the aggregate force of the army to slightly more than 60,000 men.

The Federals still retained their position on the Stafford Heights, on the north bank of the Rappahannock River. General Lee, in order to prevent another advance upon Richmond, determined to assume the offensive, by a change of base in front of the enemy's army, which was of double the numerical strength of his own, thus causing the withdrawal of the foe from the

front that he might march his forces to the protection of his seemingly threatened capital. It was a bold movement, and to render it effective the corps of Ewell and Longstreet (of the latter there were only three divisions) marched to Culpeper Court House, arriving there on the 7th day of June.

Hill's corps had remained to watch our opponents in the vicinity of Fredericksburg, and were under instructions to follow the main army as soon as they should retire from that section.

Pickett's division remained a longer period in the neighborhood of Hanover Junction, and on the 2d day of June a portion of this command acted as escort to a large foraging train into the county of King and Queen. This expedition proving thoroughly successful, the wagons returned on the 7th laden to the extent of their capacity with bacon and meal. On the day following, the division, with the exception of Corse's brigade, took up the line of march for the main army in Culpeper County.

The desired result was effected by this movement of General Lee's up the south bank of the Rappahannock, for General Hooker's troops were soon in motion in the same direction on the north bank. The cavalry, under General Stuart, having preceded the infantry, served as sentinels on the right flank of the army.

A considerable body of cavalry under General Pleasanton, supported by infantry and artillery, crossed the river at Beverly's and Kelly's fords on the 9th, and attacked our troopers; a severe engagement, which lasted throughout the day, ensued, occasioning our brave horsemen severe pressure and much suffering. Late in the day, however, with the assistance of a division of infantry, our unwelcome guests, surfeited with our entertainment, concluded to retire, and so they recrossed the river, leaving us, among other souvenirs, five hundred prisoners, three field guns, and several stands of colors. This engagement, known as the battle of Fleetwood, proved to Hooker that Lee was in that vicinity in force; consequently the Federal general proceeded to concentrate his army on the opposite bank of the river.

There was also a large command of the Federals occupying the Valley of Virginia, which, for obvious reasons, it was very necessary to expel from that locality, preparatory to a trip to Maryland and Pennsylvania then in contemplation. Therefore, on the 10th, General Ewell proceeded in that direction, and arrived at Cedarville on the 12th. Instructions were issued for the cavalry brigades of Jenkins and Imboden to coöperate with

him in making the attack. The routes of march were assigned the different commands, all converging upon Winchester, then the stronghold of the Federals, under the command of Major-General R. H. Milroy.

Everything being in readiness for action on the 14th, the works were stormed by a portion of General Ewell's corps—the determined purpose to intercept the enemy's retreat having been effected by General Johnston's division.

The grand finale of this well-conceived and gallantly executed affair shows the following results:

The enemy driven from the Valley; our capture of 4000 prisoners with their small arms, 30 pieces of artillery, a large number of wagons and horses, and army stores in considerable quantities—which was a most important item. Our antagonists had 95 killed, 348 wounded, and 4,000 missing. Our loss was 42 killed, 210 wounded.

General Hooker meanwhile had fallen back to Manassas, and had massed his army in that vicinity. He had learned a useful lesson from General Pope's experience, consequently in due time he availed himself of it, and his military genius was made evident by his drawing near the strong defences of Washington city, knowing full well that there was his ark of comparative safety.

The corps of Longstreet marched on the 15th for the Valley, taking for their route the greater part of the way the east side of the Blue Ridge, the cavalry operating on his right flank of march. As soon as Hill was relieved by the retirement of the foe from his front at Fredericksburg, he proceeded with his corps to Culpeper, and was not long in following Longstreet into the Valley.

A severe skirmish took place between our cavalry and a large body of our opponents, on the 17th, near Aldie, in which their cavalry was repulsed, and, as the day advanced, the greater portion of one of their regiments was captured. This arm of our service was kept continuously fighting for several days, and on the 21st General Stuart was forced back into the gaps of the Blue Ridge by cavalry and infantry forces that greatly outnumbered his command. The Federal losses during these engagements exceeded 500 in killed, wounded, and missing. On the other side we make no estimate, save to note that the number of prisoners who fell into our hands was in excess of four hundred.

## CHAPTER XXIX

GETTYSBURG. JULY 1-4, 1863

**W**HILE preparations were in progress for crossing into Maryland and thence into Pennsylvania, our army spent several days in and around Berryville.

The passage over the river was effected from the 22d to the 25th by the three corps, who moved by several routes into Pennsylvania, their point of convergence being Harrisburg.

News of our advance having been reported to the Federals, they at once moved forward, and having crossed the Potomac River at the fords opposite Leesburg, they marched toward Frederick, in Maryland; and from this point, on the 27th, because of some misunderstanding with the authorities at Washington, the Federal commander, General Joseph Hooker, tendered his resignation. This proving acceptable, General George G. Meade was nominated his successor, and assumed the command.

The location of our army on the 28th stood thus: Generals Hill and Longstreet were at Chambersburg, while General Early's division of Ewell's corps was at York, and General Ewell, with his remaining divisions, was at Carlisle. As soon as General Meade assumed command, he moved his army forward rapidly until within striking distance of the Confederates.

Our cavalry commander having placed his body of horsemen on the right flank of the enemy, all communication between them and our army was entirely cut off, and in consequence thereof the movements of the Federal forces were unrevealed to General Lee until the night of the 28th. Meade having reached Frederick on that day, Lee had to concentrate as speedily as possible to meet his advance. This plan was successfully carried out, but was attended with great risk. Had the "eyes and ears of the army" been available there would have been comparatively little risk.

Gettysburg is a small town located in Pennsylvania, near the Maryland boundary line, and in a mountainous section diversi-

fied with hills, ridges, and valleys. It was a great center, from which a number of roads diverged, and here the advance columns of Lee and Meade met on the morning of the first day of July, 1863. When General Lee received the intelligence that General Meade was advancing from Frederick, he promptly ordered Hill's corps toward Gettysburg and issued instructions for Ewell's return, while Longstreet was advanced in the same direction. As Hill's advance guard, composed of Heth's division, arrived in the vicinity of the town, it was met by the dismounted pickets of Buford's division of cavalry, who had been thrown forward in the direction of Cashtown. These were easily and rapidly driven in, and the Confederates moved onward to meet the advancing infantry of the First Corps of the Federal army. Then the music began.

General Reynolds, who was in command of the enemy, was a brave soldier and fought well, and when, quite early in the engagement, he was killed, the Union cause sustained a more than ordinary loss. Heth's men engaged hotly with the enemy's advance divisions; Pender's division was forwarded to Heth's support, and as division after division was added on the other side, our men were reënforced.

Late in the action Hill's command was hard pressed, and called for assistance; Rodes' division, of Ewell's corps, was sent in response and arrived upon the scene about 2:30 p. m., and, being deployed, took a hand in the fight, which now became general and more furious. Somewhere about 3:30 p. m. General Early made his appearance, and, moving in on the enemy's flank, doubled him up, and thus changed the tide. The opposing lines were broken and swept back through the town to Cemetery Ridge, a strong line, upon which a few troops of the enemy were deployed as a rallying point.

The battle had continued for six long hours and was favorable to the Southern arms. The Southern Cross had waved high above the bunting of Stars and Stripes, while the sunlit fields received the life-blood from the defenders of each standard.

The two Federal corps engaged, the First and Eleventh, were terribly cut to pieces. General Doubleday, who succeeded to General Reynolds' command, reported that more than half of those who went into battle were killed or wounded. Unquestionably, their losses were very serious. The following extracts from the official reports will convey an idea of the severity of the fight, and consequent losses sustained

The 24th Michigan Infantry carried into the battle on that day 496 men, rank and file, and had 316 killed and wounded, and 83 missing. Four color-bearers were killed and three wounded,

The 2nd Wisconsin carried in 302 men and lost 233 in killed and wounded. The 151st Pennsylvania out of 467 men, rank and file, lost 327. The 149th Pennsylvania lost 336 men out of 450 carried into the battle.<sup>1</sup>

The troops engaged were about equally divided. Four divisions of infantry, with the artillery, on the side of the Confederates, fought two corps of infantry, the artillery, and a division of cavalry on the Federal side. Our losses were heavy, but not so large as theirs.

In the early stages of the battle, when Hill was so severely pressed, a portion of Archer's brigade was captured, General Archer himself falling into the hands of the enemy. The field, which was strewn with the dead and wounded of both armies, was left in our possession. The enemy, after being driven back, placed themselves in a strong position on the ridge about one mile south of Gettysburg.

General Anderson's division arrived just after the battle closed, and it is confidently thought by some that at this time the Federals could have been pushed back so as to have given us possession of Cemetery Ridge; but this was not attempted for reasons assigned by General Lee in his report from which the following is an extract:

The strong position which the enemy had assumed could not be attacked without danger of exposing the four divisions present, already weakened and exhausted by a long and bloody struggle, to overwhelming numbers of fresh troops.

Numerous have been the expressions of opinion from the rank and file of the Army of Northern Virginia, that had Lieutenant-General Jackson been spared to coöperate there with General Robert E. Lee on that eventful day, the Stars and Bars of the Confederacy would have waved triumphantly over the entire length of Cemetery Ridge, while the army of General Meade would from necessity have sought elsewhere a post, sufficiently strong from which to repel the assaults of a victorious foe.

Throughout the night the enemy's troops were continuously arriving, and were placed in position on the Ridge, while their

<sup>1</sup> *War Records.*



lines were being strengthened by improvised breastworks, constructed of rocks and rails. Notwithstanding all this, when the morning of the 2d dawned, their position, though strong, was not impregnable, and orders had been issued on the night previous for our men to make an attack in the early morning. But, as on some former occasions, there were laggards in the army, and before preparations were completed and the troops in position to move forward, the day had worn away, and 4 o'clock in the afternoon had arrived. By that time nearly all of General Meade's troops had reported and been assigned positions, which so augmented his strength as to place General Lee at a great disadvantage, more particularly as the assaults were made in detail, unsustained by that coöperation so essential to the success of the attacking party.

Cemetery Ridge, upon which the enemy's forces were so formidably stretched, lies from one to one and a half miles southwest of Gettysburg. The range running in a northerly direction toward the town bends to the right about a mile beyond, and terminates in a lofty crest or peak, which is known as Culp's Hill. About four miles to the southward the Ridge ends in a large mound-shaped elevation, rugged and rusty, dubbed Round Top. The former was occupied by General Meade's right, while his left rested upon the latter; the burnished bayonets bristling and glistening thereon, in companionship with the many brazen-mouthed dogs of war.

Opposite this point came a lower stretch of hills, forming what is called Seminary Ridge; and there, upon that range, were massed the Confederate forces—Longstreet holding the right, Hill the center, and Ewell the left.

Meade's position on the afternoon of that day was lined up as follows: The Eleventh corps was upon Cemetery Ridge, opposite the town; the First corps, on its right, occupying the knoll; the Twelfth corps was on a ridge to the right of the First; the Second and Third corps were to the left of the Eleventh and occupied the ridge to Round Top (Meade's right), and the Sixth corps was held in reserve.

Just here, before proceeding further, it is well to note that General Stuart, who, having been around the rear of our enemies and cut off from all communication with General Lee, had arrived at Carlisle during the 2d of July. Receiving instructions to place himself and his brigades upon our left, he obeyed the order with his usual promptness, notwithstanding the fact that

both his men and horses were much jaded by the long tramp. On the 3d they had several severe encounters with the opposing cavalry, and in one of these General Wade Hampton was very severely wounded.

The two armies were now facing each other, each ready to do its part in exterminating that of its foe, while the intervening space, interspersed with orchards and fields of waving grain in all their luxuriant beauty and peacefulness, presented a truly contradictory picture. In front of Round Top, where rested the Confederate right, the lines of the antagonist extended outward a considerable distance, forming a salient. To gain this point was the object of the day's attack, and it is supposed to have been General Lee's purpose, if entire success had crowned the efforts of the afternoon, to have there placed his artillery in position for use in driving the enemy from his more elevated lines.

The following was the order of the battle: Longstreet, with his two divisions (Hood's and McLaws'—Pickett's being still in the rear) was to attack on the right immediately fronting the salient; Ewell was to advance on our left, to endeavor, if opportunity proved favorable, to capture the works of the enemy, while Hill was delegated to threaten the center and coöperate with the movements of Longstreet.

Then came the hour for bloodshed and carnage (4 o'clock p. m.), and the artillery on the right blazed forth, succeeded by that of the left and center. It was but a little while ere hill and valley were enveloped in smoke and flame. The scene was startlingly weird. Crest after crest bristling with the lines of the blue jackets was illumined by the fiery shells, hurled forth in thundering defiance upon the wary lines of Longstreet.

Soon the leash was slipped, and Hood and McLaws, those sturdy "men of mettle," sprang forward to their work with fear-inspiring yells. The division of the former pressed vigorously upon the left, while that of McLaws struck heavily at the front. The force of the blow—which was hurled directly at the salient in the peach-orchard—was such that the "blues" retired with fearful rapidity, until they attained a more lofty eminence in their rear. This was a peculiarly rugged place, and, on account of its jagged, precipitous front, by no means easy of ascent; besides which the stone fencing and rocky boulders about its base afforded excellent harbor for infantry. Notwithstanding these various impediments in their way, Hood's men strode on-

ward and upward, driving their opponents from cover to cover, though the foe fought most stubbornly.

At this time Little Round Top was unoccupied, and as it was the key to General Meade's position, our men pressed forward to seize and hold it. They climbed the rugged slopes, and quite a number of Hood's brave men reached the crest, where soon the battle flags of the division waved about the keystone of the arch, while wild, joyous cries of victory welled forth above the harrowing din of desperate combat. Soon the shouts were silenced by a sudden burst of musketry. The great advantage to be gained by securing a foothold at this point had been perceived by our enemies after their lines had been swept back from the salient in front, and, in consequence, one of their brigades had been hurried forward to take possession of it. Hood's men, a comparative handful in number, met this host of fresh troops, and a terrific contest ensued. Encompassed though they were by the dense clouds of blinding smoke and scorching flame, the men fought hand to hand, clutching each other and dropping together in the death struggle. Smoke and dust obscured from the looker-on in the distance the heart-sickening carnage; but as the evening drew on and its breezes lifted this dusky canopy, it revealed the terrible truth that the "grays" were slowly falling back, but still fighting gallantly as they moved. The assault had been repulsed, but had the gallant men of Hood fought on for ten minutes longer, there is every reason to believe that the Confederates would have had a sufficient force on Little Round Top to have held it in defiance against the combined troops of Meade's army, and the streets of Washington City would have reëchoed with the *tramp, tramp, tramp* of the Army of Northern Virginia.

General McLaws had now pressed the enemy's lines back a considerable distance from the position in his front. When night was rapidly closing in, heavy reënforcements of fresh troops arrived to brace the Federals on their left, and the left of McLaws was forced back, while a part of Anderson's division still further to the left was driven in. Thus the battle closed in front of Longstreet, our men holding the ground they had gained on their right, and their left resting at the first position held by the foe in the peach orchard. Four pieces of artillery and two stands of colors were captured and borne off the field by Longstreet's men.

During the great rush and roar on the right, the troops on

the left, under Ewell's command, had by no means been idle. The greater number of our batteries, after an hour's fierce cannonading, having been overpowered and consequently silenced, Johnston's division moved forward to the attack, and, meeting the opposing forces—all strongly entrenched as they were—forced them to retire some distance, Johnston's left brigade capturing the portion of the breastworks located on Culp's Hill, and holding that position throughout the night.

Two brigades of General Early's division charged the lines of the enemy on the Ridge, and, after a very stubborn fight, succeeded in moving him out and taking possession of a number of his guns. Strong lines of fresh troops soon appeared in front and on the flank, while our brave soldiers, being unsupported, most reluctantly withdrew, bringing with them a number of prisoners and four stands of colors. If coöperation on the right of Ewell's lines could have been effected, the enemy's works, it is believed, could have been held. Each of the Confederate commands, as heretofore named, had participated in the evening's continuous conflict, each man fighting as only a veteran can fight, while their opponents enacted their part with like valor. Three brigades of Anderson's division had once obtained possession of the enemy's lines and a number of batteries, but receiving no support that might make their retention possible, they were obliged to relinquish them and return to their own lines. There were heavy, severely heavy, losses, including many general officers on both sides.

The Federal troops who were in action against the Confederates this time were the following: The Third Corps held the salient and advanced lines, which were attacked by Longstreet, bearing the brunt of the battle at that point, receiving assistance from the Second and Fifth corps; the last named defending Round Top. The Sixth and a portion of the First corps were also engaged. The Eleventh sustained the fight on the left, with the assistance of the remaining portions of the Second and First corps.

The subjoined quotation is from the report of the Federal general, John Gibbons, commanding the Second Corps:

No sooner was the Third Corps in position, with its right resting near the brick house and left "in the air," than the enemy made a most furious assault with infantry and artillery on the flank, rolling it back and enflading the whole line. Such a flank attack could not be successfully resisted, and although dispositions were made

to check the advance of the enemy, he came on so rapidly as to drive everything before him.

The excess of successes thus far, notwithstanding the fact that the assaults had been disjointed and lacking in requisite coöperation, had been in favor of the Southern arms, and from this arose General Lee's determination to prolong the contest. Torn and bleeding, the two gladiators occupied the same positions on the morning of the 3d that they had held at the close of the combat on the preceding night. The Federal works so successfully wrested from them the evening before were held fast by Ewell's left. This point (Culp's Hill) was so necessary to General Meade that before our men were ready to make an advance he initiated the movement and commenced the attack.

General Longstreet was still holding the field from which General Sickles had been driven, and the prospect was not yet unfavorable to Southern success. Longstreet was in receipt of orders to attack the Federals in his front, and use every endeavor to turn their left. Ewell also was under instructions to follow up his successes at the same time.

Our eager antagonists, however, did not await General Ewell's movements, but, in the early dawn, opened, from batteries put into favorable positions under cover of night, a scathing fire upon the Confederates posted on Culp's Hill. Assaults from infantry succeeded this, and for four long hours the conflict raged. These attacks were repulsed with severe loss to the enemy's side, and we continued to move forward until he was driven well-nigh to the top of the Ridge, when our further progress was hindered by the discovery of a heavy line of breastworks constructed of logs and stones. At that point the Confederates held their own until almost one o'clock, when the information reached them that they were being flanked by a greatly superior force (numerically) of their assailants, and only then did they withdraw.

The attack on our right not being executed, as was contemplated, the order of the day had been entirely changed in consequence of the aforesaid engagement. The projected attempt to capture the enemy's left by flank and in reverse—an effort that was to have been made by General Longstreet's troops—was relinquished by General Lee, who decided to make a direct assault upon the position held by the foe on Cemetery Ridge, or,

to speak metaphorically, he proposed to drive a wedge straight at the center, and if happily he could split the obstacle as he wished, his troops could be thrown into the opening and the enemy's lines be taken in reverse, right and left.

It was surely a bold and most hazardous stroke—one which, if successful, would lay open a way for victory to the Confederate cause and would bear rich fruits. The divisions of Pickett and Heth, the latter under command of the brave Pettigrew, a part of Pender's division under Trimble, and the brigade of Wilcox were chosen to compose the assaulting columns. The men of Pickett's division were fresh, but the remainder of the other troops had been previously engaged in action, by which some of the brigades had been greatly reduced, especially that of Pettigrew, nearly one-half of whose members were cut down in the fight of the first day.

The assaulting party numbered somewhere near 15,000 men, who were to be supported by a number of batteries, which were to move forward with the infantry; the artillery of the army, located on Seminary Ridge, from center to right, was to open the battle, and when the proper time should arrive the infantry was to advance. Major-General George E. Pickett was entrusted with the arrangement of the lines of assault. His division was formed with two brigades in front (those of Garnett and Kemper) and one in the rear (that of Armistead), while the rear right was supported by Wilcox's brigade, of Anderson's division. Heth's division, under the command of Pettigrew, was formed in two lines, supported by a portion of Pender's division, under command of Trimble. The lines of Pickett and Heth were to move abreast of each other, the first named forming the right, and Heth the left. The men were arranged in readiness below the crest of the hill that was occupied by our artillery, and there they awaited the signal for their advance.

Cemetery Ridge, on which the lines of the enemy were stretched out, was bristling with artillery and black with infantry, and was somewhat more than half a mile distant. The ground that intervened between these points was open and slightly undulating. Obstacles to be surmounted in our progress were three high post and rail fences, and on the slope of the hill, within seventy-five feet of the crest upon which the enemy's guns were posted, arose, breast-high, a heavy stone wall, behind which lay the enemy's main line of battle.

Before our men could wield a weapon to effect one telling

blow, each of these impediments was to be overcome by them.

The precise time does not seem to have been put upon record, but between the hours of 12:30 and 3:30 p. m. the infantry stood in readiness to move, and the signal guns were fired. At this, our artillery blazed forth from right to left, and the guns of our opponents followed in immediate response. Such an indescribable din from the thunderings of artillery was never heard before on this continent. The earth was shaking, the trees were trembling, almost rocking, in response to the vibration of this deep-toned music, and from one to two hours the unrelaxing *boom! boom! boom!* and *crash! crash! crash!* of the canons, the noise of the bursting shells, with occasionally the explosion of a caisson, continued. At length the firing from the Federal guns began to decrease, and then the volleys from ours, until suddenly perfect stillness reigned.

With bated breath the troops of each army awaited the sequel to this artillery duel, but this was not for long, as the word was very soon thereafter given, and the assaulting Confederate columns moved promptly forward. With stern step and determined mien they marched as when upon parade, preserving perfect line, with banners flying, and each man with head erect. It was a noble sight, but one of unspeakable sadness! When they reached the center of the plain that lay between the lines, the guns of the enemy opened upon them, throwing shells and canister into their ranks, thus greatly reducing their numbers. The advance was continued until within 250 or 350 yards of the first lines of the enemy when the iron hail became terrific, especially so to the left, leaving great gaps in the ranks of the North Carolina, Alabama, and Tennessee troops, of Heth's division, and these brave fellows, whose ranks had been severely cut to pieces in the previous days' battles, faltered and before reaching the first line of the Federals, many of them, unable to force themselves forward, fell back to their original position behind our artillery. Some of that force, however, reached the stone wall. The right column, composed of the three brigades of General Pickett, numbering in all about 5,000 men, moved steadily forward with calm determination, closing up their lines as men, dead or wounded, dropped from them. With unswerving valor they breasted the storm of burning shot, of shells and canister. Then, when within range of the Federal musketry, deadly volleys were poured upon them from front and right. But onward they pressed, and, changing from a quickstep to a double-quick, they

rushed upon the foe, drove him from his front lines, and, pushing him, disconcerted and in disorder, back over his last line of works, closely followed him.

They planted, with victorious shouts, their banners of red and white upon his strongest ramparts. Though the victory was of but short duration, Cemetery Ridge had been wrested from the Federal arms and occupied by the Confederates in the interval that remained before the rallying and remassing of the opponent's hordes of men. For soon our small band of devoted heroes was well-nigh surrounded and driven back amid the continuous volleys of lead and iron rained upon them.

The repulse had been complete ; it was irretrievable. But they had done their best and now, alone and unsupported, the remnant of them fell back to the position from which they had commenced their advance.

Our side had sustained fearful loss, in Pickett's division alone there being 2,888 killed, wounded and missing. This celebrated charge of General Pickett's closed the battle of Gettysburg.

Union losses	..	..	.23,049
Confederate losses	....	.....	.20,451



## CHAPTER XXX

THE RETREAT FROM PENNSYLVANIA. JULY 4-13, 1863

**N**OTWITHSTANDING the defeat that had befallen the soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia in their last great effort to storm the works of the enemy, their prowess remained undaunted. Their fearlessness in assaulting the strong lines of the Federal army had secured for them the outspoken admiration of their adversaries, and the laurels earned in the hard-fought battles upon many sanguinary fields were unfadingly green in the myrtle wreaths awarded by loving friends.

The arrival of the Fourth of July, 1863, showed the 50,000 well-tried soldiers of all arms remaining in good condition, ready for orders, and their commanders most appreciatively cognizant of the reliance to be placed in men of such stamina. General Meade, the accomplished commander of the Federal forces, wisely deemed it inadvisable to occasion another general engagement, and consequently made no attack.

General Lee's retreat was by no means a hurried one such as had been General McClellan's from before Richmond, but a slow, calm, determined move. He was a considerable distance from the base of his supplies and in the country of the enemy, where there was great difficulty in procuring subsistence absolutely necessary for his men; hence the reason for his withdrawal toward the Potomac at this time.

Throughout the night of the third and during the whole day of the fourth the Federals remained in line on Cemetery Ridge, while our forces occupied the crest of Seminary Ridge—the left of the line, General Ewell's corp, having withdrawn from Gettysburg and its vicinity to that point. We held ourselves in readiness in the event of an attack, but the day drew to its close without any demonstration of an advance on the part of our antagonist.

Our dead were buried during the day, and those of the wounded that were within our lines were cared for. Such as

were in condition for traveling were placed in ambulances and wagons and sent in the direction of Williamsport.

The rearward movement of the army began after dark, but the rear-guard was not withdrawn until after daylight on the morning of the 5th of July. Owing to recent heavy rains, the roads were in very bad condition; indeed, they had become almost impassable for artillery and wagons, consequently the march was tediously slow. The rear-guard, which was composed of General Gordon's brigade, was assailed by the enemy on the afternoon of the 5th, but, making a spirited stand, he was easily repulsed, and the wagons were dispatched on their route forward. A second assault was attempted the next day by the Federals, who succeeded to the extent of capturing a number of wagons laden with our wounded; but our cavalry, assisted by a force of infantry, soon relieved them of their booty and put them to flight.

Our army reached the vicinity of Hagerstown on the 7th and went into camp on the west side of the mountain. On the 4th the enemy captured the guard of the pontoon bridge at Falling Water, and destroyed the bridge.

The river had become so swollen by rain during our retreat that it was impossible to ford it. General Lee's preparations were made accordingly. Selecting a strong line, with his right and left resting upon the river, he proceeded forthwith to entrench; but a little while transpired before he was in condition to repel successfully any attack his opponent's forces might be likely to make upon him. Men were, without delay, busied in the work of constructing the boats requisite for another pontoon bridge. Flat boats received the wounded and bore them as rapidly as practicable across the river to be forwarded for necessary attention to Winchester. Notwithstanding the scarcity of clothing, the many shoeless feet, and the lack of every variety of comfort by both officers and men, the morale of the Confederate army was excellent.

On the 11th the following order was issued:

GENERAL ORDERS  
No. 76

HDQRS. ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,  
July 11, 1863.

After long and trying marches, endured with the fortitude that has ever characterized the soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia, you have penetrated the country of our enemies, and recalled to the defense of their own soil those who were engaged in the invasion of ours.

You have fought a fierce and sanguinary battle, which, if not attended with the success that has hitherto crowned your efforts, was marked by the same heroic spirit that has commanded the respect of your enemies, the gratitude of your country, and the admiration of mankind.

Once more you are called upon to meet the army from which you have won on so many fields a name that will never die.

Once more the eyes of your countrymen are turned upon you, and again do wives and sisters, fathers, mothers, and helpless children lean for defence on your strong arms and brave hearts.

Let every soldier remember that on his courage and fidelity depends all that makes life worth having—the freedom of his country, the honor of his people, and the security of his home. Let each heart grow strong in the remembrance of our glorious past, and in the thought of the inestimable blessings for which we contend, and, invoking the assistance of that Divine Power which has so signally blessed our former efforts, let us go forth in confidence to secure the peace and safety of our country.

Soldiers, your old enemy is before you: Win from him honors worthy of your righteous cause,—worthy of your comrades, dead on so many illustrious fields.

R. E. LEE,  
General.

The position our army occupied during this time was far from an enviable one. The unbridged river roaringly surged in its rear, while numerically superior hostile forces were in front. This might have produced disastrous results, but, fortunately, General Meade believed it unwise to risk an assault upon our lines, held as they were by the veterans of General Lee. Our previous attacks upon his strong works, and the heavy losses sustained by him, convinced him that there was but little to be gained thereby.

The greater part of seven days was consumed in his advance to our front. Having determined on the 12th to make an attack early on the following morning, he called a council of war composed of his corps commanders, to ascertain their views relative to its practicability. Of the six who answered the summons, there were five who voted against making the assault. The probabilities are that such an assault would have brought dire disaster to the Federal arms, which would have aroused still greater dissatisfaction and murmuring at the Federal capital. President Lincoln's advisers, however, entertained an entirely different opinion; their great solicitude was for the complete

annihilation of our army before there was time for them to return to Virginia. It was because General Meade failed to carry out these wishes that severe censure was meted out to him—censure that brought from him a prompt request to be relieved from the command of the Federal troops. This, however, was recalled, or never acted upon, as it was explained to him by the authorities that the censure had been administered to him as a stimulant. The telegrams received from Washington were so numerous and of such urgency that, notwithstanding the expressed opinions and wishes of his corps commanders in opposition, General Meade issued orders for a forward movement, to be made on the morning of the 14th. Its execution was begun in earnest, but only a very short time elapsed before the Federals became cognizant of the fact that their game had quietly departed during the preceding night, and that only a very small portion of the Confederate army remained on the Maryland side of the river. We quote the extract from Lieutenant-General R. S. Ewell's report to prove the good condition of the army and its readiness for the enemy's reception. He says:

On the 11th were moved into line between Hagerstown and Williamsport; our right joining the left of the Third Corps, and began fortifying, and in a short time my men were well protected. Their spirit was never better than at this time, and the wish was universal that the enemy would attack.

The withdrawal of the Confederate forces, in the face of their antagonists all ready for an advance, was truly a hazardous proceeding—one that required nerve and will of iron to ensure successful execution. The removal of the different components of the army—infantry, artillery, and trains—was effected during the afternoon and night of the 13th, and the midday following found all safely landed across the river.

There was some heavy skirmishing between our rearguard and the enemy's cavalry, who had made several charges. Our losses were light, consisting of about 500 prisoners, captured while straggling; a few wagons also fell into the enemy's possession.

One of President Lincoln's characteristic dispatches corroborates the impression that has gone forth that General Meade's nerves needed a considerable tonic to brace them sufficiently for the hazard of another battle. Here it is:

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, July 15th, 1863, 9 a. m.  
HON. SIMON CAMERON, HARRISBURG, PA.

Your dispatch of yesterday received. Lee was already across the river when you sent it.

I would give much to be relieved of the impression that Meade, Couch, Smith, and all, since the battle of Gettysburg, have striven only to get Lee over the river, without another fight. Please tell me, if you know, who the one corps commander was who was for fighting in the council of war on Sunday night.

A. LINCOLN.

After crossing the Potomac our army advanced leisurely in the direction of Winchester. General Lee's purpose of moving directly into Loudon County, east of the Blue Ridge, was frustrated by the swollen condition of the streams, caused by the excessive rains, which rendered them impassable. The enemy meanwhile had passed over the Potomac at Harper's Ferry and Berlin, and had taken possession of the eastern slopes of the mountains before arrangements could be made by which we could lay the bridges. This necessitated a change of plans; so, after both men and animals had enjoyed a good rest in the vicinity of Bunker Hill and Darkesville, on the 20th day of July, Longstreet's corps commenced the march toward Culpeper, by the way of Front Royal.

## CHAPTER XXXI

CORSE'S BRIGADE. THE MOUNTAIN GAPS. JULY-AUGUST, 1863

TO the brigade of Gen. Montgomery D. Corse we will now turn. It was left in the neighborhood of Hanover Junction, employed in the delectable occupation of guarding bridges. The General's headquarters were at Taylorsville, and had we been permitted to remain in that beautiful locality as guardians of the bridges, we would greatly have enjoyed it and have encountered no suffering; but on the 10th of June, two days after the residue of our division had marched, an order for our departure arrived, and the Seventeenth Virginia Regiment having been relieved by a part of the Twenty-fifth North Carolina Regiment, we started for a point about a half mile beyond Hanover Junction and there awaited the coming of the remainder of the brigade. Here the Fifteenth and Twenty-ninth regiments joined us on the morning following, and we began our march toward Culpeper Court House. We passed through the village of Childsburg (where we were joined by the Thirtieth Regiment), and bivouacked beyond, after having accomplished a march of eighteen miles.

The tramping on the following day proved tiresome and discomforting, as the thermometer ranged high and the road was dusty almost to suffocation. As we neared Taylor's Mill, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, a courier reached us with dispatches bidding us remain there until further orders. With 11 o'clock on the morning of the 13th, orders came—orders that required our return to Hanover Junction. We accordingly moved off, and arrived at Taylorsville some time during the night of the 14th.

The ensuing day we resumed our old places and our accustomed employment, that of guarding the bridges, and had soon settled down again, taking advantage of an interval in which to revel in the delights of fishing, bathing, and boating on the river. Needless to say we enjoyed it all with vim.

On the night of the 24th orders were delivered to General

Corse from General Lee advising our commanding officer to report with the brigade at Gordonsville. Very soon thereafter a dispatch arrived from General Ellzey, who was in command at Richmond, informing General Corse that troops from the army of the enemy were landing at the White House. The brigade assembled at the Junction, and, after marching about six miles, we all boarded the cars, and by daylight on the 26th had arrived at Gordonsville, where we disembarked. We then bivouacked in the vicinity of the village and awaited further developments. In this place there was no long tarrying, for on the succeeding afternoon we moved, by order, to Richmond, where we arrived on the following morning. We bivouacked on the north side of the James, within 3 miles of the city. But, as we were, apparently, of no assistance to that locality, we were returned on the following day to Gordonsville, where we were permitted to remain in pleasant camping grounds until the 8th of July, when marching orders arrived, which started us for the Valley. Most exhilaratingly enjoyable was the tramp over the grand old Blue Ridge; a delight, indeed, it was, to inhale the pure, bracing air and to quaff the deliciously cool water at will. Here nature, in its every department, seemed jubilant. Majestic music regaled us as the deep-toned mountain streams rushed on their way. The little throats that weary not in hymning their "*Jubilate Deo*," gave forth their sweetest notes, and the forests were vocal with melody. The sun in his gorgeous uprising, as viewed from the mountain height, then bursting upon us in greater glory with every step, filled our swelling hearts with indescribable emotions. Evidences of God's omnipotence were apparent in everything. But it was when we reached the summit of the mountain at Milan's Gap that the grandeur of the landscape absorbed us in breathless admiration; for this portion of our State was at that time inexperienced in the ravages of War, and presented a picture, every feature of which, from the outstanding crops to the barns and storehouses filled to repletion, bespoke luxury, while the widespread doors and genial greeting at the mansion told of never-waning hospitality and good cheer.

After passing through Luray, the county seat of Page, we forded both branches of the Shenandoah River, and, striking the Valley Pike at Middletown, we pursued our way thereon in the direction of Winchester. A short while after marching through Newtown we met a column of Yankee prisoners, numbering about 4,700, under the escort of a regiment of infantry,

a detachment of cavalry, and two pieces of artillery, who were on their journey south from the battlefield of Gettysburg. We continued our march on through Kernstown, forded a stream of four feet in depth, and arrived the same afternoon within a mile of Winchester. Here we went into camp, and several days were devoted to recruiting physical strength, washing clothes that greatly needed this treatment, and in righting into shape whatever was awry and was not too far beyond help.

On the 16th the Federal cavalry crossed the Potomac River at Harper's Ferry, and moved up to the vicinity of Kernsville. There General Fitz Lee, with his own and Chambliss' brigades, met them, and after a spirited engagement, induced them to retire, with severe loss. After nightfall the enemy took the route toward Charlestown, leaving their dead and many of their wounded on the battlefield.

#### THE MOUNTAIN GAPS

Our delightful resting place near Winchester did not retain us long as occupants, as on the morning of the 20th Longstreet's corps broke camp, and, led by Corse's brigade, took up the line of march in the direction of the mountains. This was in consequence of its having been reported that our opponents were on the move to get possession of the Gaps; and we, to circumvent their purpose, hurried forward to seize and occupy them as our own strongholds.

Upon our arrival at the north branch of the Shenandoah River, early on the morning of the 21st, we found the stream both deep and swift; but as necessity is said to know no law, after much difficulty the troops of Corse's brigade succeeded in their efforts to cross. After wading over the south branch of the river, we marched hurriedly through Front Royal, and from thence to our points of destination. Colonel Herbert, commanding the Seventeenth Virginia Regiment, passed on to Manassas Gap, while the residue of the brigade were sent to Chester Gap. The troops that remained of Pickett's division were hurried forward, the men wading, while their arms and ammunition were borne across in a flat boat. Colonel Herbert, upon reaching the Gap and finding it in possession of the enemy, immediately established his force in strong position on the side of the mountain. He succeeded in holding the foe in check, notwithstanding the fact that, in consequence of having sent Companies B and C



to watch and guard the road that leads from the little village of Wappen to Front Royal, he had but eight companies with which to defend the position assumed. The whole force retained by him did not exceed (counting officers and privates) two hundred and twenty-five men, while that of his antagonist, Brigadier-General Merrett, was composed of the First, Second and Fifth United States Regular troops, and the Sixth New York Volunteers.

For six full hours, Herbert's little band of braves were fighting this comparative host of the enemy, repulsing him in his repeated assaults, and, in several instances, charging the hostile cavalymen as they fled. This victory gained by eight small companies over three large regiments (the Sixth New York not having become engaged), was of vast importance to the Army of Northern Virginia, for General Meade's purpose was undoubtedly to pass through this Gap and attack our army *en route*.

It is impossible to form any conjecture as to the result had he effected this project, for it is well known that he held five corps in reserve, not far distant, in readiness to move up at a moment's notice. These columns, in fact, were marched to Manassas Gap on the following day. This, however, will appear farther on. As night approached, reënforcements and ammunition were received by the gallant Seventeenth Virginia and were at once utilized, as they were needed for repelling the enemy and in securing so much of the Gap as was deemed desirable. In this engagement three of our men were wounded and twenty-one captured, of whom five were officers. These prisoners were on picket duty at the time, and, finding themselves surrounded and escape impossible, they surrendered.

General Corse, in command of his remaining regiments, had moved to Chester Gap and secured quiet possession thereof a short while before the enemy put in an appearance. In front of him the First Brigade, First Cavalry Division, 1,000 strong, held place, under command of Colonel William Gamble. Throughout the day skirmishing was indulged in by the opposing forces, but as night approached, our antagonists retired.

On the succeeding day five corps of the Federal army were moved into Manassas Gap, with the intention of forcing themselves through. The division of General Hood had been left by General Longstreet under the command of Gen. E. M. Law, to hold the position; and most creditably did they maintain their ground until nightfall, when Gen. Law marched his

troops to follow the corps, while the men of Gen. A. P. Hill filed in and occupied their places. Similar attempts to break through were made by the enemy on the ensuing day, but were successfully checked by Wright's brigade, of Hill's corps, supported by Rodes' division of Ewell's corps. Our men were withdrawn when the darkness of night came on, and were marched by way of Thornton's Gap to Culpeper Court House. On the 24th of July that neighborhood was reached by our corps, which was soon followed by A. P. Hill's corps. General Ewell's corps did not join us until several days later.

The enemy's cavalry, supported by a large force of infantry, crossed the Rappahannock River, at Rappahannock Station and at Kelly's Ford during the night of the 21st, and took the direction of Brandy Station. Colonel Baker, in command of Hampton's brigade of cavalry, left no effort untried in the Federals' front to impede their advance as our troops gradually fell back until they reached our infantry lines. Then the pickets were advanced, and without any very great exertion, the enemy was driven back several miles. The losses on either side were light.

On the 3rd of August we again changed position. With the exception of the cavalry, which remained in the vicinity of Culpeper for the protection of the front and flanks, the entire army moved eastward and made the Rapidan River a line of defense. Here we went into regular camp life; and nearly a month of inactivity sped quickly by. The ranks of the army were greatly increased and the health of the men much improved,—indeed, the quiet restfulness enjoyed in this interval was productive of benefit in every way.

The casualties of the Federal army, in the aggregate, from June 3 to August 1, 1863, according to the "War Records," were 32,043. Reducing these figures by deducting the losses at Gettysburg, there remain 8994 to be divided among the various cavalry fights, skirmishes, and infantry contests within that period. The Confederate loss in the battle of Winchester was 252 (against 4443 of the Unionists); at Aldie and its vicinity, from June 17 to 20, our loss was 500; at Fleetwood (June 9) it is estimated at 150, and in the minor fights, 300; furnishing a total of 1202.

Aggregate Union losses, June 3-August 1, 1863 . . . 32,043

Aggregate Confederate losses, June 3-August 1, 1863 . . . 21,653

## CHAPTER XXXII

THE LINE ON THE RAPIDAN RIVER. SEPTEMBER, 1863

WHILE Colonel Herbert and his command, the Seventeenth Virginia Infantry, were in camp in the neighborhood of Culpeper, they were most delightfully surprised to have the opportunity of welcoming the return of Lieut. Scott Roy, of Company B, who was supposed,—until he made his appearance,—to be dragging out the weary existence of a captive in one or other of the Northern strongholds. He was among those of this Regiment that were taken prisoners at the battle of Manassas Gap on the 21st of July. Not caring to adopt this phase of life if possible to avoid it, he watched vigilantly for any available way of escape.

When the squadron having the prisoners in charge had halted for the night of the 22nd, in order to sleep and rest themselves, Lieutenant Roy, with the fearless bravery and coolness so characteristic of him under the most trying circumstances, promptly arranged his plans for the circumvention of the kind purposes of his guardians. Patiently waiting until they had succumbed to the all-powerful Morpheus, he quietly rolled himself outside of the circle formed by the prisoners surrounded by their guards, and cutting loose one of the finest steeds in a nearby group, was on the eve of mounting, when the animal neighed. Relinquishing his grasp on the halter, he threw himself into the grass. Awakened by the horse's cry, the owner of the animal came forward as quickly as he could to ascertain the occasion of it. Finding everything all right, except that his horse was loose, he swore at him for waking him up, while he caught and again tied him.

Preserving the utmost quiet until all seemed again to be serving faithfully by a trip to the "Land of Nod," our undaunted friend arose, and seizing another fine animal, mounted him without delay, and sped off through the darkness, in full ownership of a valuable steed equipped with an entire cavalry outfit. As may be readily supposed, he felt amply compensated for all the inconvenience endured in securing his booty.

It was during this time, and after having placed his men in possession of the beautiful camping-grounds on the banks of the Rapidan River, that General Lee,—fearing lest the failure of the Gettysburg campaign had occasioned a diminution of confidence in him on the part of the Confederate authorities,—addressed a letter to President Davis in which, after depreciating his own military abilities, he requested that a younger and more capable man should be appointed his successor as commander of the army. This letter, however, President Davis returned him enclosed in one from him, the tenor of which was indicative of the warmest admiration and the fullest confidence.

On the 8th of September, 1863, or thereabout, our army was very materially reduced by the detachment of two divisions of the First Army Corps,—under Lieut.-Gen. James Longstreet,—which were sent for service with General Bragg in the West. Pickett's Division, of the same corps, was moved meanwhile to the south of the James River. Corse's brigade, of the same division, was sent to Tennessee by way of Lynchburg, to strengthen the army of General Jones, and remained there until the second of October. These detachments decreased the number of effective troops,—including all arms,—to about 45,000. The organization of the army was as follows: The Second Army Corps, under Lieut.-Gen. R. S. Ewell comprised three divisions,—Early's, Johnson's and Rodes', numbering in all thirteen brigades; the Third Army Corps, under Lieut.-Gen. A. P. Hill, contained three divisions,—Anderson's, Heth's and Wilcox's, which, with Crooke's brigade (unattached), numbered thirteen brigades; the Cavalry Corps of Major-General Stuart had two divisions,—those of Hampton and Fitz Lee (in all, five brigades), and Beckham's Battalion of Artillery. Including the reserve there were, in addition to that mentioned, forty-seven batteries of artillery.

While the infantry was enjoying the benefit of the much-needed rest, the cavalry were kept active in front and on the flanks of the army. The frequent engagements, either in skirmish or actual combat, between the cavalry forces of the two armies were often severe.

The Federals, in large force, made a reconnoissance on the 13th. Crossing the Rappahannock River, at several of its numerous fords,—with three divisions of cavalry, under General Pleasanton, and division of infantry, commanded by General Warren,—they moved in the direction of Culpeper Court House.

General Stuart, with three brigades of cavalry, met them and endeavored throughout the remainder of the day to check their progress, but without success, as he was forced to retire until within a short distance of Cedar Mountain, when they discontinued their advance. In one of the attacks during the day it was our General's misfortune to lose three pieces of artillery. When night came he recrossed the Rapidan River, leaving his pickets in front of the enemy.

The Federals again crossed the Rappahannock River on the 16th, marched on to the neighborhood of Culpeper, and advanced two corps of their troops to the Rapidan. Three divisions of their cavalry crossed the Rapidan on the 21st and sought vigorously to flank our left. A division under General Buford reached Madison Court House, but the presence of General Stuart, with a portion of his command, occasioned a retrograde movement, which soon brought our foes to the river, which they recrossed, with the exception of their rear-guard and a number of prisoners that remained in our possession.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE OCTOBER CAMPAIGN OF 1863

FOR some weeks after the attempts to force a way through our lines there was a lull in which but little of interest transpired that was worthy of record. The opposing armies faced each other with the Rapidan between them, each awaiting the first move of the other.

Owing to the Confederate soldiers' being destitute of clothing necessary to keep them from any inclemency of the weather, their condition was anything but comfortable. Thousands were entirely barefooted, while others kept up the semblance of shoes with fragments of leather; while overcoats and blankets had long since become rarities indeed. This condition of affairs determined General Lee to take the initiative in opening the campaign, so that, if practicable, he might precipitate an engagement with the enemy. With this aim in view, he began the movement on the 9th of October, 1863.

The Federal army lying around Culpeper Court House had two of their divisions occupying the advance posts on the banks of the Rapidan. The enemy's aggregate effective forces, equipped and present for duty, numbered 73,364, while, according to the abstract of September 30, our effectives were 44,362. The odds shown were certainly great against General Lee; but notwithstanding this fact, he moved his men promptly, in his endeavor to turn the right of the enemy.

The campaign that ensued was certainly unique. The Confederate forces having crossed the Rapidan River on the 9th, made their advance by way of Madison Court House. A detachment of infantry and Gen. Fitz Lee's division of cavalry were left to hold the line of the Rapidan. The other Confederate cavalry division (General Hampton's), under the command of General Stuart, moved on the right and in front of the army.

The enemy's cavalry advanced the following day, but were met and driven back to James City, a distance of several miles.

At this point, however, it was discovered that the cavalry was in such good position, supported by infantry, and that its lines were so strong and its numbers so in excess of ours, that our men in consequence failed in their efforts to dislodge them. But on the following morning the Federals fell back, and our forces pressed forward in pursuit.

Later in the day it was ascertained that General Meade was moving rapidly to the rear, and that the bulk of his troops had already crossed the Rappahannock. In the meanwhile a column of the enemy's cavalry had passed over the Rapidan to the south of our army's location, and being met by Gen. Fitz Lee, it was made to recross the stream and retire in the direction of Brandy Station.

On the 11th the cavalry commands of Stuart and Lee, having united their forces, charged this body of the enemy, and forced them, with heavy loss, across the Rappahannock. On the 12th the army was hurried on in two columns; General Lee wished to strike the Federals in flank along the line of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, north of the river, and bring them to battle. But as the foe had the inside track, our troops were distanced. It was afternoon when we reached the Warrenton Springs. We had a little contest here with a portion of the enemy's cavalry and artillery, in which they were driven back, and the passage of the Rappahannock effected. Our troops after this went into bivouac on both sides of the river.

The town of Warrenton was reached the next day and here the columns united; a halt was made, and rations were issued to the men. It is more than probable that the loss of time occasioned by this halt caused the failure of our commander's plans, for while we halted the Federal army moved rapidly and steadily along the line of the railroad and the roads running parallel thereto.

On the early dawn of the 14th our troops were pressing forward by two routes,—one leading by New Baltimore, and the other by way of Auburn and Greenwich, both converging at Bristoe Station. The Third Corps, under command of Lieut.-Gen. A. P. Hill, pursued the latter way, and when the hills overlooking the plains on the east side of Broad Run were reached, the Federals were plainly visible to the Confederates.

The following quotation from General Hill's report will convey a very clear portrayal of what occurred a short while thereafter. He says:

I determined that no time must be lost, and hurried up Heth's division, forming it in line of battle along the crest of the hills and parallel to Broad Run. Poague's battalion was brought to the front and directed to open on the enemy. They were evidently taken completely by surprise, and retired in the utmost confusion. Seeing this, General Heth was directed to advance his line until reaching the Run, and then to move by the left flank, cross to the ford, and press the enemy. This order was being promptly obeyed when I perceived the enemy's skirmishers making their appearance on this side of Broad Run, and on the right and rear of Heth's division. Word was sent to General Cooke, commanding the right brigade of Heth's division, to look out for his right flank, and he very promptly changed front of one of his regiments, and drove the enemy back.

In the meantime I sent back to General Anderson to send McIntosh's battalion to the front, and to take two brigades to the position threatened and protect the right flank of Heth. The head of Anderson's column appearing, Heth was now ordered to advance again and carry out the original order. Davis' brigade, of Heth's division, had been detached as a support to Poague's battalion. The three brigades (Cooke's, Kirkland's, and Walker's) advanced in beautiful order and quite steadily. Cooke's brigade, upon reaching the crest of the hill in their front, came within full view of the enemy's line of battle behind the railroad embankment (the Second Corps), and of whose presence I was unaware.

The position was an exceedingly strong one, and covered by the direct and enfilading fire of batteries on the rising ground in the rear. A portion of Cooke's brigade became hotly engaged, and of course it became impossible to execute his original order to move by the left flank. Kirkland, finding Cooke engaged, also swung around his left and gallantly charged to Cooke's assistance. McIntosh's battalion had before this been ordered by me to take a position overlooking the railroad and station, and in rear of Cooke's left. Poague's battalion was ordered to take another position and open fire on the battery which was enfilading Kirkland's line. This was not done as quickly as I expected, and Kirkland's line was exposed to a very deliberate and destructive fire; nevertheless, it continued to advance and gained the railroad, clearing it for a time of the enemy. About this time Generals Cooke and Kirkland were both wounded, and their fall, at this critical moment, had a serious influence upon the fortunes of the combat. Their men were unable to stand the heavy fire which was poured upon them and, commenced falling back [the three right regiments of Cooke's brigade] in good order.

Walker had crossed Broad Run in pursuance of the original order. Anderson had been sent to the right to look out for the



threatened right flank, and no support was immediately available, Wilcox's division not having yet come up. The infantry falling back, the left of Cooke's brigade passed through McIntosh's guns, and the enemy pressing on the guns, five in number were immediately seized, and run down the hill under protection of the enemy's artillery and line of battle. General Walker, upon being informed of the perilous condition of the guns, immediately sent forward a regiment and drove off the enemy, but the guns had disappeared. Dark came upon us before new dispositions could be made to attack, and during the night the enemy retreated.

General Heth says of it:

The two brigades [Cooke's and Kirkland's] moved off in handsome style. The skirmishers soon became engaged. The enemy's strength in my front was only known from the reports made by Captain Johnston, Engineer Corps. As subsequently shown, it proved to be Warren's Second Army Corps.

Marching parallel to the railroad, the enemy was concealed from our view by the hills and woods. On seeing our advance, the enemy formed his line in rear of the railroad embankment, his right resting on Broad Run and hidden by a railroad cut. In his rear a line of hills ascended to some 30 or 40 feet in height, giving him an admirable position for his artillery. The railroad cut and embankment at the foot of the hill gave him perfect protection for his infantry.

In rear of the enemy's right, on the hills just noticed, a circular line of rifle-pits had been thrown up for the protection of the bridge over Broad Run. These rifle-pits were filled with infantry, and a battery was established in rear and higher up the hills.

As Kirkland moved forward, his left struck the enemy in the railroad cut near Broad Run. He drove everything in his front along the line of the railroad before him, but was unable to carry the second line of works (rifle-pits, &c.) that were in his front. When in the railroad cut, his men were exposed to an enfilading fire from his right, in addition to a severe fire from a battery on the north side of Broad Run. The position was untenable. He was compelled to fall back. A number of his men, unwilling to expose themselves, remained in the railroad cut and were captured.

During the advance of Kirkland, Walker gained ground to the left, crossing Broad Run. Finding that Kirkland's left was gaining ground to the right, General Walker recrossed the run. Before he could form on Kirkland's left, Kirkland had been driven back. General Walker during the rest of the engagement supported a battery from Poague's battalion, placed on a hill about 700 or 800 yards from the railroad. The engagement was over before either Walker or Davis could be brought into action.

General Warren, commanding the Federal Second Corps, says:

General Webb, with his skirmishers, engaging the enemy, was moving to our right to endeavor to connect with the Fifth Corps, and one of his brigades had nearly crossed the stream. I directed him to halt and face to the left, and to hold the railroad embankment, which he did. Knowing the locality well, I at once ordered General Hays to face his division to the left, and run for the railroad cut, invisible from where we were. This was promptly done without hesitation, General Hays and General Owen leading the line, under a heavy musketry fire from the enemy, and impeded by our artillery, which, with most commendable energy, was striving to get to the front, where it could share in the unexpected conflict.

A more inspiring scene could not be imagined—the enemy's line of battle boldly moving forward, one part of our own steadily awaiting it and another moving against it at double-quick, while the artillery was taking up position at a gallop and going into action.

Under our fire the repulse of the enemy soon became assured, and Arnold's battery arrived in time to help increase his demoralization and reach the fugitives.

The enemy was gallantly led, as the wounding of 3 of his general officers in this attack shows, and even in retiring, many retired but sullenly. An advance of a thin line along our front secured 450 prisoners, 2 stands of colors, and 5 field pieces. Twenty-two dead horses were found on the ground which this battery occupied.

Brigadier-General Owen, of the 3rd Brigade, says:

After the repulse of the enemy [an attack of Confederate cavalry at Kettle Run] I moved by the flank on Catlett's Station, and, after a short halt, moved on Bristoe Station. Here the enemy appeared in great force and prepared to dispute our right of way. After my column was unmasked from the woods through which I had been marching, I received orders to march my brigade by the left flank and on the double-quick, and to occupy the deep cut on the railroad. This was accomplished under a heavy fire of artillery and infantry, with considerable loss in killed and wounded. I found two brigades of the Second Division on my right already in position, and, subsequently, the Second Brigade, of the Third Division, took position on my left. From this position I opened a very effective fire upon the enemy, and soon forced him to retire from my immediate front. Owing to Captain Arnold's battery being posted in my rear and firing over my men, and my not receiving any orders so to do, I did not move forward to take advantage of the enemy's flight. Some skirmishers were deployed to the front,

who took and brought back to our lines four of the enemy's forsaken cannon and a number of prisoners.

From the extracts quoted it will be readily seen that General Hill, in his intense anxiety to strike the marching columns of the enemy, was a little too quick in movement; since it culminated in an engagement with a largely superior numerical force before the majority of Hill's own men had arrived upon the field. Though his men fought with gallant desperation, they labored in vain, as the enemy's position was far too strong for our comparative handful,—composing two small brigades,—to succeed in dislodging them.

Before the morning of the 15th, the foemen again took up their retreat march; and it was not long after that the report was received of their fortifying along the east banks of Bull Run.

General Stuart having made a reconnoissance in the direction of Catlett's Station during the night of the 13th, discovered to his surprise that he was located between two bodies of Federal infantry on the march. Notwithstanding this by no means satisfactory condition of affairs, he promptly decided upon concealing his whereabouts from his antagonists, forward the information of their movements to General Lee, and await the dawn of day. In his report he says:

It will be perceived that the enemy's column diverged at Warrenton Junction, and, embracing me, converged again in the direction of Bristoe Station. Several dispatches captured during the night satisfied me that, notwithstanding the skirmishing that had taken place, the enemy was ignorant of my position; and having placed my artillery in a commanding position, I was prepared to coöperate with any attack made by our main body upon the flank. I dispatched six separate messengers (bold men), who were directed to slip through the enemy's column, the marching of which was distinctly heard, passing within a few hundred yards of our position, and to reach the commanding general with information of the state of affairs. All of these messengers got safely through by 1 o'clock at night. The morning came, and with it a dense fog, which tended further to conceal our whereabouts. But the enemy were only a short distance from us and we heard every word spoken. An army corps halted on a hill just opposite to us, stacked arms, and went to making coffee. This operation had considerably progressed when a sharp volley of musketry was heard on the Warrenton Road. I waited until it appeared more general, when, believing that it was our attack in earnest, I opened seven guns

upon the enemy and rained a storm of canister and shell upon the masses of men, muskets, and coffee-pots.

Strange to say, the fire of our infantry ceased as soon as I opened, and I soon found myself maintaining an unequal contest with an army corps, a considerable portion of whom, being under the hill, recovered from their stampede and consternation sufficiently to move out upon either flank under cover of the rolling ground, so as to make my position untenable with the kind of force I had. A vigorous attack with our main body, at the time I expected it, would have insured the annihilation of that army corps.

My extrication from this embarrassing situation with the comparatively small loss which I sustained is due, under Providence, to the gallant officers and men of my command, who, upon this trying occasion, which thoroughly tested their soldierly character, exhibited nerve and coolness which entitles them to the highest praise from their commander.

General Stuart followed,—on the morning of the 15th,—the retreating enemy, driving in their pickets at Manassas; then he continued the pursuit to McLean's Ford, where he encountered a large force of cavalry, supported by infantry. Dismounting his men and moving forward, our gallant Fitz Lee drove our enemies with such vim as to compel them to retreat across Bull Run. The line was held, and severe skirmishing and cannonading were indulged in during the greater portion of the day. The principal command, under General Stuart, passed the night near Manassas.

Leaving Gen. Fitz Lee, with his division, at Manassas, to keep an eye on the invaders in that vicinity, General Stuart, on the morning of the 16th, moved with the residue of his command by way of Sudley Ford toward the right and rear of the Federal army. Arriving in the neighborhood of Frying Pan Church the succeeding day, he was met by a considerable force, and after about two hours' skirmishing he ascertained their strength and position, as well as acquiring other important information. As the objects of his reconnoissance had thus been accomplished, he quietly withdrew his command,—slowly retiring.

When near Haymarket, on the night of the 18th, General Stuart received information that a forward movement of the enemy's forces,—consisting of one division of cavalry, six pieces of artillery and a column of infantry,—was in progress. The advance of this large body struck our pickets at Gainesville that same evening, about dusk, and commenced skirmishing. One brigade, under General Young, was sent to hold Haymarket,

while the remainder of our troops prepared to fall back. On the following morning, as the pickets retired slowly before the advancing enemy, the command withdrew toward Buckland.

Gen. Fitz Lee having been notified of the state of affairs, was requested to look out for the right flank of the retiring column. From the manner in which he obeyed this order originated the sobriquet by which that battle was ever after known,—“The Buckland Races.”

General Stuart's report runs thus :

About this time I received a dispatch from Major-General Lee stating that he was moving to my support, and suggesting that I should retire before the enemy, with Hampton's division, in the direction of Warrenton, drawing the enemy after me; when he would come in from Auburn and attack them in flank and rear. I at once assented to this arrangement, and sending back word to Major-General Lee that I would be ready to turn upon the enemy at his signal gun, I retired, with the division, slowly before the enemy until I reached Chestnut Hill, within  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles of Warrenton. This plan proved highly successful. Kilpatrick followed me cautiously until I had reached the point in question, when the sound of artillery toward Buckland indicating that Major-General Lee had arrived and commenced the attack, I pressed upon them suddenly in front, with Gordon in the center and Young and Rosser on his flanks. The enemy at first offered a stubborn resistance to my attack, but the charge was made with such impetuosity, the First North Carolina gallantly leading, that the enemy broke and the rout was soon complete. I pursued them from within 3 miles of Warrenton to Buckland, the horses at full speed the whole distance, their column completely disorganized and retreating in confusion.

About 250 prisoners were captured, together with 8 wagons and ambulances, Brigadier-General Custer's headquarters, baggage, and official papers, with many arms, horses, and equipments, and the whole division dispersed in a manner graphically described by one of their own writers as “the deplorable spectacle of 7,000 cavalry dashing riderless, hatless, and panic-stricken” through the ranks of their infantry. Had his artillery been anywhere near the front, it would undoubtedly have fallen into our hands.

Crossing at Buckland, Major-General Lee pushed down the pike toward Gainesville, while, with the few men of Gordon's and Rosser's brigades which could be collected after the chase (Young's brigade being sent round to the rear), I moved to the left and pressed down toward Haymarket. Here a cavalry force and the First Army Corps were encountered. The latter retired a short

distance beyond Haymarket and I attacked their infantry pickets by moonlight, capturing a number of them and scattering them over the fields. Major-General Lee met their infantry near Gainesville and took many prisoners belonging to the First Army Corps on that road also, the pursuit being continued by both divisions until after dark.

The force opposed to us upon this occasion consisted of ten regiments of cavalry and six pieces of artillery, commanded by Brigadier-General Kilpatrick; and I am justified in declaring the rout of the enemy at Buckland the most signal and complete that any cavalry has suffered during the war. It is remarkable that Kilpatrick's division seemed to disappear from the field of operations for more than a month, that time being necessary, no doubt, to collect the panic-stricken fugitives.

After this brilliant dash and signal victory had been achieved by the cavalry, it moved leisurely back until in proximity to our army,—which had fallen back across the Rappahannock River,—and posted its pickets on the south bank of the stream.

According to the report of the provost-marshal of our army, the number of prisoners captured and turned over to him by the cavalry during this short campaign was 1370.<sup>1</sup>

During our retrograde movement the bridges had been burned, and on the railroad from Cub Run to the Rappahannock River the rails had been torn up and bent, and the ties burnt.

General Lee reports the total number of prisoners captured,—in which he included 434 taken by General Imboden in the Valley,—as 2436, of whom 41 were commissioned officers. The Federal compilation reaches only 1423.<sup>1</sup> The losses are reckoned thus in the "War Records":

Union, 2292; Confederate, 1391.

<sup>1</sup>*War Records.*

## CHAPTER XXXIV

KELLY'S FORD AND RAPPAHANNOCK STATION. NOVEMBER 7, 1863

OUR army was permitted to rest for a few weeks only, for as soon as our forces had fallen back from their front, the Federals immediately commenced to repair the railroad and to advance as their work progressed. They had reached Warrenton Junction by the 6th of November, and on the succeeding morning they moved a force consisting of the Third, Fifth and Sixth corps rapidly forward to the Rappahannock River. Their left column, under command of Maj.-Gen. W. H. French, marched toward Kelly's Ford, while the right column, commanded by Maj.-Gen. John Sedgwick, pressed steadily forward for Rappahannock Station. The main purpose of this advance was to effect the crossing of the river, in order to force the Confederate army back, or to bring on a battle with it. The action at Kelly's Ford having begun first, it is proper that its description should come first in order.

The division of Maj.-Gen. R. E. Rodes was in charge of the defenses at this point. Two regiments, the Second and the Thirtieth North Carolina,—the former on outpost duty at the three fords (Wheatley's, Kelly's, and Stevens, the larger portion of the regiment being at Kelly's Ford), and the latter held in reserve,—were protecting a solitary gun, about three-quarters of a mile from the river. The total force of effective men that has been assigned to and were employed in the defense of a line two miles in length was less than 820. The division was encamped about one and a half miles away from the Ford, too remote to render efficient service when its pickets were surprised.

The location of the ground was entirely favorable to our opponents,—the high bluffs were on the side of the river they occupied, while on our side the ground was open and sloped to the river. Their artillery was thus in position to rake the open space at Kelly's Ford, consequently the place was doomed to be captured from us as soon as they, at about half-past twelve, suddenly put in their appearance and opened fire from artillery

and musketry. Less than an hour had elapsed before the forcing column had pushed its way through the rapids above the ford, and attacking the rifle-pits in flank, compelled the surrender of those holding them; this was accomplished before General Rodes had time to complete the disposition of his division.

The Thirtieth North Carolina attempted to go to the assistance of the Second, and moved forward; but in crossing the open fields they encountered the concentrated fire from several batteries of the enemy,—a fire so galling as to thin their ranks and produce demoralization. The gallant Second fought with stubborn bravery, all unsheltered as they were, until finally, a fragment of them left, they could hold out no longer against the overwhelming numbers opposing them; and so the major portion of those not killed were wounded or captured. By two o'clock the enemy had a whole division in control, on our side of the river. Our men formed in line of battle about a mile and a half in the rear, and toward the close of the day were reënforced by Johnson's division.

Orders having been received during the night for us to withdraw, we did so in the direction of Culpeper Court House. Our losses were: 5 killed, 59 wounded, and 295 missing; while the Federals lost but 42 men.

Efforts had been made to strengthen the defenses on the north side of the river at Rappahannock Station by converting the earthworks which had been thrown up by the Federals during their former occupation into a *tête-de-pont*, with a line of rifle-pits running right and left to the river bank. This defense was supplied with a battery of four guns; the ground on the south side being much lower, sunken batteries for eight pieces, with rifle-pits connecting them, were constructed; but at the time of the advance of the enemy on the 7th these were only partially occupied. They were so arranged as to protect the withdrawal of the troops to that side in case of necessity. This defense was in charge of General Ewell's command.

On the day named, the right column of the Federals, composed of the Fifth and Sixth corps,—the former moving on the right and the latter on the left of the railroad,—invested the Confederate position, beginning about three o'clock to drive in our pickets, who fell slowly back to the rifle-pits. Several Federal batteries judiciously placed on the heights beyond them, opened, and received vigorous response from the four guns in the *tête-de-pont*; while those located on the south side of the stream



opened briskly, but soon desisted, finding their position was such that they could effect but little damage to the foe. At this time the impression obtained that our troops consisting of General Hay's brigade, reënforced by a portion of General Hoke's brigade, was fully able to defend itself against an attack of the enemy, or, if forced to retire, could do so safely across the pontoon bridge, which was so situated as to be under cover of our guns and rifle-pits on the south side, and beyond the direct fire range of any position in the occupancy of the enemy. General Lee in the meanwhile had ordered forward the other troops of our army, with artillery. When it became so dark as to render it difficult to see with any distinctness what objects were in motion, our enemy came pressing rapidly forward against our position. The following extracts, taken from official reports, describes what followed:

General Early says:

During all this time the wind was blowing very hard toward the enemy, so that it was impossible to hear the report of the guns even at a very short distance. I had remained with General Lee, at his request, who in the latter part of the afternoon had taken his position on the hill occupied by Dance's battery, and about dark the artillery fire ceased, and some movements of the enemy took place which we could not well distinguish. In a short time, however, some firing of musketry at and in front of the rifle trenches was observed from the flashes of the guns, it being impossible to hear the report by reason of the wind, though the distance was but short.

After the firing had continued for some minutes it slackened somewhat, and not hearing from it, we were of opinion that it was from and at the enemy's skirmishers, and General Lee, expressing the opinion that the movement by the enemy on this part of the line was intended merely as a reconnoissance or feint, and that it was too late for the enemy to attempt anything serious that night, concluded to retire. It was then nearly, or quite, dark, and while I must confess that I did feel considerable anxiety for the result of a night attack if the enemy should have the enterprise to risk it, yet the confident opinion expressed by the commanding general disarmed my fears. The firing at the trenches continued, and while I was making arrangements to send off two dispatches for General Ewell, left with me by General Lee, Major Hale, of my staff, who had been previously sent on foot across the river with messages for General Hays and Colonel Godwin, returned and informed me that when he left General Hays the enemy was advancing against him; that he had then gone to Colonel Godwin, and as he returned

across the bridge he had seen some of Hays' men, who told him that Hays had been driven from the trenches; but he stated that he did not believe this statement, as he left Hays and his men in fine spirits; and I did not believe it myself, as the firing seen by us did not warrant any such supposition.

I, however, sent Major Daniel, of my staff, immediately to ascertain the state of things, and ordered Pegram to move up to the bridge with his brigade, and Dance and Graham to man their guns. I then started toward the bridge and met Major Daniel returning with the information that he had just seen General Hays, who had made his escape, and received from him the information that the greater part of his brigade was captured and Hoke's brigade cut off, and the enemy in possession of the north end of the bridge. Pegram's brigade was hurried up and so disposed as to prevent a crossing of the bridge, and Gordon was sent for from the right, and a messenger sent to General Lee. I then went near the river to ascertain if anything could be done to retrieve the disaster, but found it would be a useless sacrifice of my men to attempt to throw any of them across the bridge, as the enemy were in line just beyond the opposite end and were in possession of the trenches commanding it. I could not use the artillery, by reason of the darkness and for fear of firing into my own men who were prisoners in the hands of the enemy.

Hoke's brigade had not at this time been captured, as I subsequently ascertained, nor had the Fifth and Seventh Louisiana Regiments, of Hays' brigade, but they were hopelessly cut off from the bridge, without any means of escape and with no chance of being reenforced; and while making the preparations for defending the bridge and preventing an increase of the disaster, I had the mortification to hear the final struggle of these devoted men and to be made painfully aware of their capture, without the possibility of being able to go to their relief. I might have fired canister across the river, and perhaps done some damage to the enemy, but the chances were that more damage would have been done to my helpless men, and I felt that it would have been cruel and barbarous to have subjected them to this result for any amount of damage I could then inflict on the enemy. This contains as much of this affair as I am capable of describing from actual observation.

Brig.-Gen. H. T. Hays says:

About 5 o'clock a battery was opened on our right and another opposite our center. The firing from the enemy's guns on the right, left, and center, converging on the point occupied by us, was rapid and vigorous until some time after dark. It was then, under cover of the darkness, that a simultaneous advance was made of the entire force of the enemy.

In the center the skirmishers were driven back, and their first line was so broken and sheltered by our fire that the few who arrived at the works surrendered themselves; but the second and third lines continued to advance at a double-quick, arms at a trail, and a column formed (as well as the obscurity of the evening permitted me to descry) by companies, moving down the railroad, was hurled upon our right, which, after a severe struggle, was forced back, leaving the battery in the hands of the enemy. I immediately ordered a charge of the Ninth Louisiana Regiment, for the purpose of retaking our guns; but our center having been broken and the two forces opposed to our right and center having joined, rendered the execution of my purpose impracticable.

Forming a new line after this junction, facing up the river, the enemy advanced, moving behind our works toward our left, while a line which had formed in a ravine above our extreme left, its (the enemy's) right resting on the river, moved down the stream, thus inclosing Hoke's brigade and the Seventh and the Fifth Louisiana regiments in a manner that rendered escape impossible. My men continued at their post in the works, fighting well to the last, and it was only when the command was cut in two, and the enemy in complete possession of the entire hill, that any thought was entertained of falling back. Indeed, there was no effort made by any one in my command to recross the river until nothing else remained but to surrender. Many then escaped by swimming or fording the river, and some few on the pontoon bridge.

These affairs proved serious indeed to our arms in the loss of men, 1899 of whom were left in the enemy's hands. The numbers of our killed and wounded were small, the aggregate being 158, which is accounted for by the fact that the assailing columns came forward with arms at a trail. Our battery of four guns, with all its horses, also fell into the enemy's hands.

The aggregate loss of the Confederates is estimated at 2057, while that of our opponents was but 461. The capture from us of a position so important as that on the north side of the river made it obligatory upon our Commander to withdraw his forces. This was done the same night, and the army took up a line between Culpeper Court House and the Rappahannock River. This position, however, was held only during the following day, for it was not regarded as desirable, being liable to be turned on either flank, and so it was abandoned.

## CHAPTER XXXV

THE MINE RUN CAMPAIGN. NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1863

OUR army now retired to the Rapidan and reoccupied its old lines on the south side of the stream. The Federal Commander moved forward his entire army across the Rappahannock, and encamped in the vicinity of Culpeper Court House. A general quietude ensued in this locality until the 26th day of November, when our General was apprised of the fact that our antagonists were in motion. It was this movement that initiated the Mine Run Campaign.

To the lower fords of the Rapidan marched the enemy, a portion of them, during the night, crossing the river. General Meade's arrangement was to turn our right and force us into battle, hoping thereby to find us unprepared; and then he expected to whip us in detail. General Lee was kept constantly advised of all his movements, consequently, on the night of the 26th he withdrew from the line of the Upper Rapidan and marched out to meet the foemen. Gen. Fitz Lee's cavalry remained in charge of the deserted infantry lines; General Ewell's corps, preceded by Hampton's division of cavalry, moved down the road to Locust Grove; Hill's corps meanwhile marching on the Plank Road.

Mine Run, flowing in a northerly direction, empties into the Rapidan River, and is about twenty miles, more or less, southeast of Orange Court House. A mile and a half to the east of the run, on the 27th, the head of Hill's troops met the cavalry retiring before the advancing enemy. Deploying a brigade of infantry in support, the advance was checked. General Early's division, under General Hays, arriving within a mile of Locust Grove, and finding it already in hostile hands, lines were formed at right angles to the Old Stone Turnpike and preparation made for a meeting.

General Rodas formed on General Hays' left and General Pegram on his right,—at right angles. The Federals were in possession of the heights about the Grove, consequently their

position, thickly wooded, was well screened from our view. Our line was on lower ground, which afforded no suitable positions for artillery.

Johnson's division in the meantime, having marched by way of Bartlett's Mill toward Locust Grove, had been detained by an attack upon its ambulance train. Taking it for granted that the attack had been made by a body of the enemy's cavalry, orders were sent to General Johnson to drive them off. While deploying and advancing his troops a large force of infantry was encountered. This brought on quite a spirited engagement, which resulted in the enemy's being driven back through the woods to an open field. The dense woods that covered the rugged face of the country occasioned great disadvantage to the Confederates.

The contest was prolonged until after dark; but before it closed, General Dole's brigade had been sent to reënforce Johnson. By their very gallant behavior our troops succeeded in forcing the enemy back some considerable distance, and thus was the fact revealed that in their front and on their flanks was the whole Federal army. General Early, who commanded the corps, upon receiving this information ordered the troops to fall back upon Mine Run. This movement was effected during the night, without hindrance of any kind from the enemy; and when morning came, all our army was concentrated on the west bank of the Run upon a position strong by nature, and one that had been very materially improved by earth-works thrown up during the night. Ewell's corps was on the left, and on the right was Hill's.

The troops of our opponent made their appearance on the morning of the 28th in our front on the hills beyond; and during the day they deployed into position. Skirmishing was indulged in to some extent, but no attack was attempted.

While these movements were in course of execution, General Rosser, who was guarding the roads to Fredericksburg, became cognizant of the fact that a large train of wagons, laden with ordnance stores, was parked near Ely's Ford. He quietly permitted the enemy's cavalry, who were protecting the left flank of the Federal army on the march, to pass him, then, adroitly crossing the Plank Road, he moved rapidly down upon the train.

Notwithstanding the fact that it was moving forward before he reached it and was guarded in front and in rear, he succeeded in destroying some 35 or 40 wagons and bringing away 8 loaded with stores, 7 ambulances, 230 mules and horses, besides

95 prisoners, having lost during the attack 2 men, who were killed, and 3 wounded. Upon the arrival of the enemy's infantry General Rosser was forced to retire.

When, on the 29th, the artillery of the enemy opened a heavy fusillade upon our position, it was supposed to be preparatory to an assault. At intervals our guns responded, but the cannonading soon ceased, and the skirmishers only were kept employed. Arrangements had been made for an attack on the morning of the 30th,—a plan which, however, was not carried out. Of this General Meade's report, given below, will furnish the particulars.

He says:

A reconnaissance of the enemy's position showed it to be extremely formidable. The western bank of Mine Run, with an elevation of over 100 feet, had a gentle and smooth slope to the creek, averaging over 1,000 yards of cleared ground. The summit, on which was the enemy's line of battle, was already crowned with infantry parapets, abatis, and epaulements for batteries. The creek itself was a considerable obstacle, in many places swampy and impassable.

A careful examination, made personally and by engineer officers, convinced me there was no probability of success in an attack in our immediate front, in the vicinity of the turnpike. It was therefore determined, on the evening of the 28th, to send Major-General Warren with the Second Corps and a division of the Sixth Corps, to move to our left, to feel for the enemy's right flank, and turn him, if practicable. At the same time orders were given to each corps commander to critically examine his front and ascertain the practicability of an assault. The 29th was spent in these reconnaissances and the movement of General Warren.

About 6 p. m. Brigadier-General Wright, commanding a division in the Sixth Corps, reported to me he had discovered a point on our extreme right, where the obstacles to be overcome were much less than in our immediate front, and where an assault, he thought, was practicable with inconsiderable loss. At the same time Captain Michler, Engineers, reported that an assault in front of the Third Corps, though hazardous, was not impracticable. I also learned from Major Ludlow, aide-de-camp, just returned from General Warren's column, that General Warren had moved up the Plank Road, driving in the enemy's skirmishers, till he developed their line of battle, and had taken a position which outflanked the enemy, and from which there was no difficulty in assaulting and turning the enemy's flank.

These favorable reports caused me to decide on making three assaults,—one on the enemy's left flank, with the Sixth and Fifth

Corps; one on the center, with the Third and First Corps, and one on the enemy's right, by the force under General Warren, consisting of the Second Corps and one division of the Sixth.

At 8 p. m. General Warren reported in person, confirming all Major Ludlow had reported, and expressing such confidence in his ability to carry everything before him as to induce him to give the opinion that he did not believe the enemy would remain overnight, so completely did he command him. The earnest confidence that General Warren expressed of his ability to carry everything before him, and the reliance I placed on that officer's judgment, together with the fact that Major-General French had given an adverse opinion to assaulting in his front, induced me to modify my plan so far as to abandon the center attack, and reënforce Warren's column with two divisions of the Third Corps, which would give him six divisions, nearly half the infantry force under my command. Orders were accordingly issued to that effect.

On the 30th the batteries opened at 8 a. m. The skirmishers of the First and Third Corps advanced across Mine Run and drove in the enemy's skirmishers, and every preparation was made by Sedgwick for his attack (he having moved his columns during the night and massed out of view of the enemy), when, about ten minutes of 9, I received a dispatch from General Warren to the effect that "the position and strength of the enemy seem so formidable in my present front that I advise against making the attack here—the full light of the sun shows me that I cannot succeed." The staff officer who brought this dispatch further reported that General Warren had suspended his attack, and would not make it without further orders.

As Sedgwick's attack was subsidiary to Warren's and as, owing to Warren's confidence of the night before, I had given him so large a part of the army that I had not the means of supporting Sedgwick in case of repulse, or reënforcing him in the event of success, I was obliged to suspend the attack of Sedgwick on the enemy's left, which I did just in time; and immediately proceeded to General Warren's column, some 4 miles distant, in hope of arranging some plan by which the two attacks might yet take place in the afternoon.

I reached General Warren between 10 and 11 a. m. and found his views were unchangeable, and that it was his decided opinion it was hopeless to make any attack.

It was too late to move the troops back and make an attack on the center that day, and General Warren was already so far separated from the right that his movement to turn the enemy's right could not be continued without moving up the rest of the army in support, and abandoning the Turnpike Road, our main line of communication. Nothing further could be done this day, and at

night the two divisions of the Third Corps returned to the center, and the Fifth and Sixth Corps returned to their former positions.

It was then reported to me that the opening of our batteries in the morning had exposed to the enemy our threatened attack on his left, and that he could be seen strengthening the position by earthworks, abatis, putting guns in position, &c., so that by night-fall the chances of success had been materially diminished, and, knowing he would work all night, I felt satisfied that by morning the proposed point of attack, which had been weak, would be as strong as any other part of his line.

Under these circumstances I could see no other course to pursue than either to hazard an assault, which I knew to be hopeless, and which I believed would be attended with certain disaster, or, acknowledging the whole movement a failure, withdraw the army to the south bank of the Rapidan.

In full view of the consequences, after mature deliberation, I determined to withdraw the army.

The failure of General Meade to attack our lines was attributable in a great measure to the alertness of our commander and the effective rapidity with which the officers and men of our army labored in the completion of the formidable line of earthworks, which confronted our foes when they approached to what, according to their calculations, would prove an easy victory,—akin to the "*Veni, vidi, vici!*" of antiquity.

Another and presumably an equally potent reason for the relinquishing of the plan to assault our right with the 28,000 men under General Warren was the significant action of the men themselves, as if pronouncing a verdict. When the time designated for the assault arrived, it was discovered that each soldier had pinned to his coat a piece of paper upon which his name was written. This expression of their presentiment of death and defeat was startling, and the order to withdraw was promptly given.

General Lee was patiently waiting, in daily expectation of being required to repulse the attack, until the night of the first of December, when, finding that the enemy still failed to advance, he decided to become the aggressor. Accordingly he made his arrangements to assault the Federal position at daybreak of the 2nd.

At the hour appointed our skirmishers were advanced, but before proceeding very far, it became apparent to them that the enemy had retired. Pursuit was immediately begun; but upon reaching the Rapidan River the coast was clear, as they had



already crossed and were 'way out of danger. Except the cavalry, who remained in front, our men were then withdrawn, and they returned to their former position on the Rapidan.

This unsuccessful effort to find General Lee off his guard,—this failure to beat his army in detail,—was harassingly bitter to the Federal general, who, since his rations were about consumed, availed himself of the only course to him,—that of returning whence he came. And thus it was the Mine Run Campaign was closed,—a campaign that furnished so unique an illustration of how the big fish was about to swallow the little one that quietly awaited his motions, but the current changed the big fellow's course, and he backed off downstream.

Casualties:

Union	forces, Nov. 26–Dec. 2	1653
Confederate	forces, Nov 26–Dec. 2	652

On the 20th day of November, 1863, the writer, in accordance with the order of the Secretary of War, was transferred from Company H, Seventeenth Virginia Infantry, to Company G, First Regiment Engineer Troops, C. S. A., Col. T. M. R. Talcott commanding, and until the close of the War was identified therewith. This Regiment was attached to the Army of Northern Virginia, was engaged with it in all its movements, and many of its battles.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### THE WINTER OF 1863-4

THE month of January, 1864, passed in quiet to the soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia. In winter quarters on the line of the Rapidan, their duties were not irksome. The greater portion of the artillery was parked far inland, thereby obtaining easier access to forage, of which during the year 1863-4 there was great scarcity. For the same reason the bulk of the cavalry was scattered far and near. Though thousands of the soldiers were barefooted, scantily clad, and with meagre supply of rations, they were cheerful and uncomplaining. Blankets and socks were in great demand, and were regarded as luxuries by thousands who were without them. These deficiencies occasioned General Lee extreme anxiety; and he did all that man could do to secure their supply, but for reasons easily understood by Confederates, his efforts were but partially successful.

On the 6th day of February there was a demonstration made by the enemy. The Second Army Corps, under the command of General Warren, crossed one division at Morton's Ford, capturing our pickets, one officer and twenty-five privates. Throwing out skirmishers, they advanced their lines about a half-mile,—perhaps more. The First Company of Richmond Howitzers, without any support, after having fired the signal, opened vigorously upon them and checked their advance. Before the enemy had time to develop our front, our infantry had arrived, and promptly took position behind the rifle-pits prepared to repulse them.

Our lines were so favorably constructed as to be able to rake with our artillery the position occupied by our adversaries, who had placed themselves,—unintentionally of course,—in a kind of *cul-de-sac*. In consequence of this, when our guns opened and the lines were advanced, the Federals were easily driven to the river under cover of their guns. They recrossed during the night, and retired to their camps.

For so small an engagement the losses on the Northern side were severe, numbering 255, while ours did not exceed 35.

That there was a special object in this demonstration on our front the following account will explain:

Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, in command of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina, with headquarters at Fortress Monroe, on this same day, sent out a force numbering 6200, infantry and cavalry, under command of Brigadier-General Wistar for the purpose of capturing Richmond and of releasing the prisoners confined at Belle Isle. This movement was intended to initiate an incalculable surprise to our people, and no doubt had success attended it, it would have surprised the entire world. On the morning of the 7th the head of their column reached Bottom's Bridge, 12 miles distant from Richmond; but finding that our men were awake and "at home," the Federals did not press their advance upon us, though we were comparatively few in number. After a very feeble effort to force the passage of the bridge, the enemy suddenly fell back, and were very soon retracing their steps in flight toward Williamsburg. A force of our men, a few hundred strong, followed closely upon the fleeing foemen's heels, and overtaking their rear-guard at Baltimore Store attacked them and quickened their pace. As utter failure attended the whole affair, it partook of the nature of a grand burlesque. The advance of General Warren's corps at Morton's Ford was intended as a diversion in the enactment of this stupendous non-performance.

When these affairs subsided, quiet soon reigned again in the camps.

Many of the hardy veterans of the Army of Northern Virginia were Soldiers of the Cross, who frequently met for prayer and praise to the "Giver of every good and perfect gift," inspired by the Saviour's promise that "Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them." These meetings in the various camps had been the occasion of much serious inquiry into the way and plan of Salvation,—inquiry that came from thousands who had previously merely acquiesced in its great apparent truthfulness. Many realized the fulness of the Saviour's love and became His devoted servants. Prayer to the God of battles for blessing and guidance arose with heartfelt fervor as an especial daily privilege. Veterans in military duty were suppliants in "putting on the whole armor" of Spiritual Warfare. In chaplain, officer, messmate, and above all

in their commander they found hands and hearts in readiness; for Gen. Robert E. Lee, faithful to duty in all the walks of life, was a devoted Christian; and it was with undisguised pleasure that he attended many of the numerous meetings, and, as a layman, assisted to the extent of his ability in deepening the religious impressions and aspirations of his men.

Apart from these assemblings, there was very little of interest that occurred to break the monotony of camp life, until the latter part of February, when another grand show of interest in the liberation of the Federals imprisoned in Richmond burst forth,—a movement warranted to attract attention.

President Lincoln became very eager to distribute his amnesty proclamation within the lines of the Confederate forces, and for this purpose the second philanthropic raid was inaugurated. It was General Meade's happy thought which suggested that by "a rapid and secret movement Richmond might be carried by a *coup de main*, and our [their] prisoners released before reënforcements from either Petersburg or Lee's army could reach them."

Brig.-Gen. J. Kilpatrick, famous in cavalry annals, was selected and installed as the leader in this "hazardous undertaking." The command assigned him consisted of a column of picked men from the cavalry divisions of the Federal army, numbering 3582, with six pieces of artillery.

Before proceeding further with this portion of that memorable mission, a divergence is necessary, in order that some of the preliminaries thereto may be noted.

In order to prevent General Lee from forwarding aid to the troops about Richmond, the Sixth Army Corps, under Major-General Sedgwick, was advanced to Madison Court House, on the left of our lines, and Brigadier-General Custer, with a body of 1500 cavalry, was sent in the direction of Charlottesville, with instructions to destroy the railroad bridge across the Rivanna River. Custer moved promptly, and arrived within about two miles of the bridge without meeting opposition. Near the river the Stuart Horse Artillery, under command of Captain Moorman, was parked. The horses were all loose in the fields, and to save the guns from capture, as the enemy was approaching, it was necessary to do a little fighting before the horses could be caught and harnessed. Several guns were run out by hand and opened a vigorous fire upon the advancing foes, who had crossed the river in two columns,—one at the Rio Bridge, while

the other, availing itself of a ford some distance below, lost no time in striking the camp and setting it on fire. The right column pressed forward and charged. As the two Federal columns came face to face with each other, the smoke arising from the burning tents and the flashing guns caused them to mistake each other for foemen and to open fire, in which both were broken and put to flight. Our cannoneers and drivers, who had been mounted to make a show as a troop of horse, observing the discomfiture of their antagonists (the one brother fleeing from the other) made a most energetic charge, and drove them in undignified haste across the river. This charge was led by Captains Chew and Breathed, each noted for distinguished bravery on many a battle-field.

It may be safely said their fugitives did not return, and it is very doubtful whether they ever discovered the mistake they had made,—that of fighting one another, each under the impression that the other was a Confederate.

General Kilpatrick crossed the Rapidan during the night of the 28th of February. The advance, some five hundred men, under Colonel Ulric Dahlgreen, captured the pickets,—two officers and fourteen men,—at the ford and moved rapidly toward Frederick's Hall. The main column, under General Kilpatrick, marched by way of the North Anna River, crossing near Carmel Church, and Hanover Junction, toward Richmond. Under command of General Long, a large number of General Lee's guns were in cantonment at Frederick's Hall. Four small companies of sharpshooters, which had been organized by General Long, with some of the men from the batteries armed with muskets, were, upon the approach of the enemy, deployed in front of the guns in position, which had been arranged so as to command the road that led to the Station. These preparatory measures were barely completed when the enemy made his appearance. "Seeing the battle-flag flying above the battery, and catching a glimpse of the bayonets of the sharpshooters, he halted in some surprise, having been led to suppose that the artillery at Frederick's Hall was without an infantry support. Bringing forward a contraband who had been recently captured, Dahlgreen inquired whether or not there was infantry posted with the artillery, to which the negro replied, "Yes, massa; plenty of it." Being doubtful whether the negro knew what infantry meant, he asked him how he knew it. "Because," he said, "the infantry had stickers on the ends of their guns." Convinced by the evidence of the negro that the

artillery was not unprotected, Dahlgreen made a detour to the left, keeping beyond the range of the guns."<sup>1</sup>

An agreement had been made between the two columns of the enemy to meet near the city of Richmond at 10 o'clock a. m., on the first day of March. General Kilpatrick struck the Brook Pike some five miles from the City at the hour specified. Colonel Dahlgreen not having arrived, and his whereabouts being unknown, General Kilpatrick determined to make an attack without further delay, believing that unaided he could enter the city. About one o'clock in the afternoon, he ordered forward a line of dismounted skirmishers, supported by a body of about five hundred dismounted cavalrymen; and his artillery being brought to the front and its fire opened upon our lines, our pickets were forced back. Just at this moment, reinforcements arrived on our side; which having been discovered by General Kilpatrick, he concluded that an "attempt to enter the city at that point would but end in a bloody failure." Consequently, withdrawing his troopers, he crossed at the Meadow Bridge and went into bivouac in the vicinity of Mechanicsville.

While Kilpatrick was thus encamped endeavoring to give his men and horses the luxury of a rest, General Hampton, in command of a small body of horsemen, only 306 men and one battery of artillery, interrupted him about 10 o'clock p. m. with an unexpected salutation. So rapid and vigorous was this attack, and so expert the firing of Hampton's guns in the darkness and during a snow-storm, that it is not to be wondered at that General Kilpatrick was taken by surprise. Notwithstanding the determined resistance made, it proved futile; since the General was forced to yield under compulsion, and vacated the field, leaving desirable mementoes.

General Hampton speaks of this demonstration as follows:

The enemy, a brigade strong here, with two other brigades immediately in their rear, made a stout resistance for a short time, but the advance of my men was never checked, and they were soon in possession of the entire camp, in which horses, arms, rations, and clothing were scattered about in confusion. Kilpatrick immediately moved his division off at a gallop, leaving one wagon with horses hitched to it, and one caisson full of ammunition. These were taken possession of by Col. Bradley Johnson, who came up to that point in the morning from Meadow Bridge and found them abandoned. He also picked up a good many prisoners whose horses

<sup>1</sup> Long.

had been captured in the night attack and who were cut off from their command.

In this affair there were about 100 prisoners, 133 horses, and a number of small arms captured. General Kilpatrick in his retreat down the Peninsula was followed by Hampton as far as Old Church, at which point he was compelled to relinquish further chase on account of the unfit condition of his horses.

The party under Colonel Dahlgreen, after leaving the vicinity of Frederick's Hall on the 29th, hastened onward toward the James River, which they reached on the following day. From a point some twenty miles above Richmond, a detachment of 100 men,—with the ambulances, prisoners, the led horses, a full supply of torpedoes, turpentine, and oakum,—under the command of Captain Mitchell, of the Second New York Cavalry, were sent down the canal, with instructions to burn and desolate. Colonel Dahlgreen thereupon pushed ahead, having secured a negro guide who was to conduct him to a ford on the river.

Captain Mitchell in his report says:

I could not bring the ambulances on the tow-path, so I took the river road again, reaching which, I was surprised to find the tracks of Colonel Dahlgreen's party, and farther on the dead body of a negro hanging from a tree on the roadside. It seems that Colonel Dahlgreen intended to cross the James River by a ford, to which his guide (this negro) promised to guide him. There was neither ford nor bridge; the guide had known it, and in his indignation the Colonel hung him.

Colonel Dahlgreen, finding there was no way to cross the James save by a very small scow, abandoned the project and proceeded to the cross-roads, about 8 miles from Richmond, I think, near Short Pump. Here I joined him about 3:30 p. m. He now sent off the ambulances, prisoners, led horses, &c., under guard and in charge of the signal officer. That is the last I saw of them.

At the crossroads Colonel Dahlgreen halted that his men and animals might feed; hearing subsequently the guns of General Kilpatrick, he advanced, crossed the railroad, and was proceeding down the plank road, when, nearing the city, his column was fired into from the woods.

After continuing his advance awhile, the fire from our scouting parties deployed at intervals along his route, became so warm that the Colonel and his followers were forced to retire. They returned to their starting point and halted. It was a dark, rainy

night, freezingly cold; the front and rear columns became separated. As Colonel Dahlgreen moved on in the obscurity of the night his absence was unnoticed until the halt was called. Every effort to find him and his men proved unavailing. Finally, after a terrific experience, the command of Captain Mitchell succeeded in escaping, and reached the neighborhood of Tunstall's Station, where they joined General Kilpatrick, at about half-past five o'clock on the evening of the 2nd of March. The firing of the Confederates out of the darkness of the woods that lined the roadsides, into the moving ranks of the invaders, occasioned considerable damage to their numbers. The column commanded by Colonel Dahlgreen undertook to make an escape through the counties of King William and King and Queen to Gloucester Point; but they were closely followed by a small detachment of cavalry under command of Lieut. James Pollard of the Ninth Virginia. On the route the lieutenant's ranks were augmented by some of the Home Guard and other detachments of troops. Upon arriving near King and Queen Court House, Lieutenant Pollard disposed of his forces, with a view to the ambuscade and capture of the retreating party.

Dispatching a small force to harass the enemy's rear, he withdrew his main body, and making a detour, passed on ahead, and took position in front of the marching foe; and when they had approached sufficiently near, his guns were put in requisition. Colonel Dahlgreen fell under this fire, and the remainder of his party scattered in the surrounding woods. This occurred at about 11 o'clock at night, and Pollard remained where he was until daylight, when, observing most of the enemy in an open field, he approached them, whereupon they surrendered without a fight. The captured numbered 175, of whom 40 were negroes.

On the body of Colonel Dahlgreen were found important papers, one of which was an address to his command; while another contained memoranda in which were noted explicit instructions as to the designs of the expedition. From these two papers it was ascertained, beyond a shadow of doubt, that in the event of Colonel Dahlgreen's capturing the city of Richmond, and releasing the prisoners, President Davis and his Cabinet were to be murdered and the city consigned to the tender mercy of the torch.

This atrocity of purpose could not be ignored, or passed by without some action on the part of the Confederate Government. At first, thoughts of exercising retaliatory measures upon



captives from the raiding party were discussed, but General Lee was consulted and his unimpeachable judgment produced a change and occasioned a correspondence, by flag of truce, between him and General Meade.

General Lee asked of the Federal Commander:

"Whether the designs and instructions of Colonel Dahlgreen, as set forth in these papers,—particularly those contained in the above extracts,—were authorized by the United States Government, or by his superior officers; and also, whether they have the sanction of those authorities."

To which General Meade's reply was prompt and pertinent.

"In reply I have to state that neither the United States Government, myself, nor General Kilpatrick authorized, sanctioned, or approved the burning of the city of Richmond and the killing of Mr. Davis and Cabinet, nor any other act not required by military necessity and in accordance with the usages of war."

This being satisfactory to our authorities the matter ended.

Very little was accomplished to the Federal cause by this raid. Their loss in men, killed, wounded and missing, was 365; horses, 583, and 5498 small arms, besides saddles, bridles and other cavalry equipments. Not a dozen of our men were hurt, and the few who were captured succeeded in making their escape or were released.

March and April were months of leisure to our soldiers. General Lee left no effort unmade that would tend to increase his army, or render it more efficient for the approaching struggle, which was the most serious one which had ever awaited the Army of Northern Virginia.

The recall of Longstreet and his two divisions from Tennessee, the return of convalescents and absentees, added to the conscripts who had been mustered into service, combined with the army already in the field, were insufficient to swell the number of his forces beyond 64,000, of all arms. The lack, however, was in numbers alone, for each soldier stood ready, with spirit undaunted, and courage unflinching, willing to meet the first advance of a foe that outnumbered them two to one. Our army's deficiency in clothing was such that many of our men were clad in rags, and hundreds of them were shoeless; but their hearts were right, and they held themselves ever prepared to die for the cause they so much loved.

The authorities at Washington were sowing money broad-

cast in vast sums to obtain men and means for putting down the "Rebellion." The campaign mapped out for the spring of 1864 was stupendous in its conception, continuous in its operations, and in its finality fatal to the cause of Southern liberty.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### GRANT'S FIRST BATTLE IN VIRGINIA: THE WILDERNESS MAY 5-6, 1864

ON the 10th of March, 1864, U. S. Grant, a native of Ohio, and connected with the Army of the West, was commissioned as lieutenant-general, and all the armies of the Federal Union (the whole world having representatives therein) were assigned to his command. The new commander-in-chief made his headquarters in the field with the Army of the Potomac, which was under command of General Meade, and through him he personally directed all its movements. His intended mode of warfare was so totally different from that pursued by any of his predecessors, that he became known in the ranks of the Confederates as the "Hammerer." His first determination (according to his report) was to use the "greatest number of troops practicable against the armed forces of the enemy," and his second was "to hammer continuously against the armed force of the enemy and his resources, until, by mere attrition, if in no other way, there should be nothing left to him but an equal submission with the loyal section of our common country to the constitution and laws of the land."

Before entering into the details of the opening of the Wilderness campaign, it may not be amiss to glance in passing at the expression of the opinion entertained by the Union soldiers relative to their newly-appointed general. The following quotation is from "Recollections of a Private Soldier in the Army of the Potomac":

One evening in March an order which invested Gen. U. S. Grant with the command of all the armies of the United States was read to us. That night we talked long and earnestly about our new general, and wondered what manner of a man he was. Old soldiers, who had seen many military reputations,—reputations which had been made in subordinate commands, or in distant regions occupied by inferior Confederate troops,—melt before the battle-fire of the Army of Northern Virginia, and expose the incapacity of our generals, shrugged their shoulders carelessly, and said indif-

ferently: "Well, let Grant try what he can accomplish with the Army of the Potomac. He cannot be worse than his predecessors; and, if he is a fighter, he can find all the fighting he wants. We have never complained that Lee's men would not fight. Whatever faults they may have, cowardice is not one of them. We welcome Grant. He cannot be weaker or more inefficient than the generals who have wasted the lives of our comrades during the past three years." But Grant's name aroused no enthusiasm. The Army of the Potomac had passed the enthusiastic stage, and was patiently waiting to be led to victory or find defeat.

On all sides I heard the murmur of the enlisted men as they expressed the hope that they would not have to fight in the Wilderness.

General Grant had evidently determined to test the fighting calibre of his own men, as well as that of his opponents under General Lee, as he was apparently impressed with the idea that in the three long years of contention but little had been done in that line. He says in his "Personal Memoirs":

"The two armies had been confronting each other so long, without any decisive result, that they hardly knew which could whip." An expression that adds nothing to his military status; for the fact stands forth imperishably that many months were required to convince the new commander that Lee's men could not be whipped, for even at Appomattox,—when almost starving, weakened by continuously severe fighting and marching and outnumbered ten to one,—they broke his lines and held him at bay, until ordered by one who was more than a father to them to lay down their arms.

The Army of the Potomac,—fully equipped with all the modern machinery of war, clad in comfort and amply supplied with nourishing food,—crossed the Rapidan River on the 4th of May, 1864, at Germanna and Ely's Fords, turning the right flank of our army, whose lines have been previously described as lying along the south bank of the aforesaid stream. Preceded by a division of cavalry, the Fifth and Sixth corps marched along the road leading to Old Wilderness Tavern, on the Orange and Fredericksburg turnpike, while the Second corps, with a division of cavalry in front and the Artillery Reserve following, moved in the direction of Chancellorsville. The supply trains, composed of an immense string of wagons which covered,—when in motion on a single road,—a distance of sixty-five miles, were in charge of another division of cavalry and followed in the wake of the troops.

The Ninth Corps, under General Burnside, moved from Warrenton the same day, and crossing during the 5th, arrived in time to engage themselves in the battle fought on that day. The entire army of Federals was thus placed, without opposition, on the right flank of the Confederate forces; in other words (as per returns, *vide* "War Records"), 125,148 men, of all arms, were present for service on our right, while our brave band could by no possibility swell their number to more than 64,000 men to contest the advance of the multitude.

Immediately after our commander had obtained satisfactory information in regard to the route pursued by the enemy after crossing the river, he ordered two corps, those of Ewell and Hill, to go and find him. Ewell advanced by the Old Turnpike, while Hill passed down the Plank Road, and when the morning of the 5th came they were in close proximity to him; for his columns were keeping the same direction, he having thrown out flankers and cavalry in advance. As the head of General Ewell's corps (composed of Jones' brigade of Johnson's division) reached the vicinity of where the Pike and the Germanna Ford Road cross each other, they were regaled by the sight of the enemy's troops passing across the Pike.

General Ewell having received orders not to precipitate an engagement until the arrival of General Longstreet's corps, which was some distance in the rear, he halted his men. This occurred about eleven o'clock in the morning. The enemy, however, on the other hand had been ordered to attack us wherever found; consequently a demonstration soon began upon Jones' brigade. Battle's brigade was hurried forward in support thereof, with Doles' upon its right. All had been instructed "not to allow themselves to become involved, but to fall back slowly, if pressed."

The enemy suddenly pressing hard upon Jones' right, his lines were broken and he was forced back upon Battle, whose men, in turn, were thrown into confusion. Against Doles, the pressure also was great, but he was able to hold his line. The brigades of Daniel and Gordon having been sent in at this time, a spirited advance was made, the lost ground recovered, and Gordon captured several hundred prisoners. Thus opened the great Battle of the Wilderness, which was one of the most sanguinary and horrible contests of the war. The attacking party was the Fifth Corps (Warren's command) and the divisions first engaged were Griffin's, Wadsworth's, and then Crawford's.

General Meade says in his report:

This attack was at first quite successful, Griffin driving the enemy (Ewell's corps) some distance back on the pike, but, as, owing to the dense thicket and want of roads, the Sixth Corps had not been able to get into position, Griffin's flank was exposed as he advanced, which the enemy taking advantage of, Griffin was compelled partially to withdraw, having to abandon two pieces of artillery. Wadsworth was also driven back. In the meantime Crawford's division, which had the advance in the morning, was withdrawn to the right toward the pike and was formed on the left of Wadsworth, one brigade advancing with Wadsworth. When Wadsworth was compelled to retire, Crawford was for a time isolated, but was drawn in; not, however, without the loss of many prisoners.

From the heavy pressure that came upon Jones' brigade, which caused it to fall back, carrying with it Battle's brigade, Battle soon rallied and rejoined the lines, while Jones passed on to the rear in order to reorganize. The lines were then reestablished on the ground first occupied, and were ranged in the following order: Rodes was on the right, Johnson in the center, and Early on the left.

At two points the position crossed the turnpike, and the men, without loss of time, began the erection of slight earthworks. Several charges of the enemy were repulsed, two pieces of artillery were captured by Stuart's and Battle's brigades in a countercharge to a point on the pike some 800 yards in front of our lines. This charging and countercharging alternated until night set in. The battle on this part of the line was closed after a fierce attack upon Pegram's brigade had been most gallantly repulsed.

The fighting was intensely severe, as heavy masses of the enemy's troops pressed strongly against our front. Ewell's corps suffered greatly, and lost three brigadier-generals: Jones being killed in his efforts to rally his men; Stafford, mortally wounded, and Pegram, disabled. But little of the artillery on either side could be utilized, because of the unfavorable condition of the ground, since the entire battle-field, with the exception of the roads, was one vast thicket of second growth, stunted timber.

Gen. John B. Gordon in his report, referring to this fight, says:

I moved my brigade by the right flank and formed at right angles to the road with as much expedition as the nature of the ground and the fire from the enemy's artillery and advancing infantry would admit. Some of my men were killed and wounded before the first regiment was placed in position. As soon as the formation was completed I ordered the brigade forward. The advance was made with such spirit that the enemy was broken and scattered along the front of my brigade, but still held his ground or continued his advance on my right and left. For the protection and relief of my flanks I left a thin line (Thirty-first and Thirty-eighth Georgia Regiments) to protect my front, and changed front to the right with three regiments (Thirteenth, Sixtieth, and Sixty-first Georgia), and moved directly upon the flank of the line on my right, capturing several hundred prisoners, among them one entire regiment, with its officers and colors. At the same time I caused the regiment on the left (Twenty-sixth Georgia) to make a similar movement to the left, which was also successful. By this time portions of Battle's brigade rallied, and with other troops of Rodes' division came forward and assisted in driving the enemy back and establishing the line, which was afterward held.

The head of Hill's corps in the meanwhile, as they were following the Plank Road, encountered the enemy's cavalry and were driving them when their infantry opened fire from the sides of the road. The advance was immediately halted, the troops deployed, and preparations made for battle. Our antagonists were not long in arranging themselves for the assault, as Hancock's corps had arrived about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Combining with Getty's division, of the Sixth Corps, they advanced with soldierly vim to the contest, pressing our men vigorously. Assault succeeded assault, each in turn was repulsed by the divisions of Heth and Wilcox, with the assistance of several batteries of artillery. The conflict for the day ended only when the darkness of the night obscured the bloody field.

Our loss was not so great as that of the enemy, though numbers of men fell on both sides.

The Federal commander, General Meade, thus reports:

So soon as Hancock arrived he was directed to attack with Getty, which was done at first successfully, the enemy, however, offering stubborn resistance. Mott's division, Second Corps, gave way, when Brig. Gen. Alexander Hays, in going to repair the break in the line, was shot dead while gallantly leading his command in the thickest of the fight. The enemy's columns being seen moving over to the Orange plank road, Wadsworth's division and

Baxter's brigade of the Fifth Corps were sent in that direction to take position and attack in conjunction with Hancock. They did not arrive, however, in time before dark to do more than drive in the enemy's skirmishers and confront him. Toward evening the Sixth Corps made its way through the dense thicket and formed connection with the Fifth, but nothing decisive was accomplished by either corps.

This battle was the beginning of the campaign and was quite remarkable, at least in this respect: the numerical disparity between the opponents engaged therein. Our army, from force of circumstances, had not concentrated, as Longstreet's corps was on the march from Gordonsville; Anderson's division held a portion of the line of the Rapidan; Johnson's brigade was at Hanover Junction, and Ramseur, with ten regiments, was on outpost duty when the army moved, and consequently could not join his corps until the night of the 6th.<sup>1</sup>

It thus appears that thirty-five regiments (not including Longstreet's division) were absent, and hence not in this engagement. It makes rather a unique picture: Less than 35,000 men confronting a hostile army of 103,785 men (General Meade's force) and wresting from them artillery and prisoners by hundreds, while holding firm their own lines beyond their intrenchments, and losing in the struggle considerably fewer than did their adversaries. It is well worthy a place in the great picture gallery of Historical Facts, to be handed down to rising generations as one of the best examples of the art and skill of modern warfare.

In his official report, General Grant says:

Early on the 5th the advance corps (the Fifth, Maj.-Gen. G. K. Warren commanding) met and engaged the enemy outside his intrenchments near Mine Run. The battle raged furiously all day, the whole army being brought into the fight as fast as the corps could be got upon the field, which, considering the density of the forest and narrowness of the roads, was done with commendable promptness.

When the battle was concluded for that day, our troops diligently exerted themselves in strengthening our lines, and so effectually did they work that by dawn of the following day our position was too strong to be carried by direct assault.

<sup>1</sup> Ramseur's Report, *War Records*.



Rather singular at this juncture of affairs was the attitude of the two armies: Through a vast forest of entangled thickets that stretched for miles were the lines of the opposing forces, each invisible to the other, except when in close combat; and, even then, an officer in command of a regiment could not see more than one half of his men. To compare these warring troops with tigers battling in the jungle would be no untruthful simile.

The result of the contest was beyond conjecture.

During the night of the 5th the Ninth Corps of the Federals arrived upon the field and placed themselves in position. A gigantic struggle was in prospect for the coming day, as each army purposed with fullest force to strike the other such terrific blows as determination could make effective. At dawn of day the Federals attacked us, and the day was spent by them in partial assaults upon General Ewell's front,—our left,—and in efforts to gain his left flank,—every attempt of which was promptly checked. About sunset an attack was made by a part of Ewell's corps on the right of the enemy's front, at an opening in the lines, which proved to be a brilliant success to the Confederates engaged in it, and a serious blow to the enemy. General Ewell reports it as follows:

About 9 a. m. I got word from General Gordon, through General Early in person, that his scouts reported the enemy's right exposed, and he urged turning it, but his views were opposed by General Early, who thought the attempt unsafe. This necessitated a personal examination, which was made as soon as other duties permitted, but in consequence of this delay and other unavoidable causes the movement was not begun until nearly sunset. After examination I ordered the attack, and placed Robert D. Johnston's brigade, of Rodes' division (that morning arrived from Hanover Junction), to support Gordon. Each brigade as its front was cleared was to unite in the attack. Hays was partly moved out of his works to connect with Gordon. The latter attacked vehemently, and, when checked by the darkness, had captured, with slight loss, a mile of the works held by the Sixth Corps, 600 prisoners and 2 brigadier-generals,—Seymour and Shaler. Of the force encountered not an organized regiment remained and nearly all had thrown away their arms. They made no attempt to recover the lost ground, but threw back their line, so as to give up Germanna Ford entirely. Major Daniel, of General Early's staff, joined in Gordon's attack and was desperately wounded and maimed for life while gallantly assisting in this brilliant movement.

Of the battle in front of General Ewell, General Meade says :

On the 6th, the attacks were made as ordered, but without any particular success on the part of either the Fifth or Sixth Corps.

About two p. m. Burnside attacked toward the Orange Plank Road, to the right and in advance of Hancock's position, but the enemy being able to meet the assault with his whole force, Burnside was unable to produce any impression, and after evening withdrew and took position between the Second and Fifth Corps. Just before dark the enemy moved a considerable force around the right flank of the Sixth, held by Rickett's division, and, in conjunction with a demonstration in front, succeeded in forcing this division back in some confusion, making prisoners of Generals Seymour and Shaler and a number of men. This substantially terminated the battle of the Wilderness.

The battle raged fiercely in General Hill's front; for while his divisions, which had been engaged on the previous day, were being relieved, the entire line of our enemies was advanced, and for a while there was promise of success to their arms. As Heth and Wilcox were pressed back, the guns of Poagues battalions,—of artillery,—having had a good position assigned them near the Plank Road, opened fire almost vigorously upon the advancing foe, thus checking him sufficiently to afford opportunity to Longstreet's men, who were coming on the field, to deploy for a charge. Material aid from other batteries brought forward was efficiently rendered, and the enemy's headway was checked. The charge was gallantly pushed until the opposing braves turned in their tracks and retreated, not, however, without heavy loss.

General Longstreet in his report says :

Arriving at Parker's Store about dawn, I was directed to move my column down the Plank Road to relieve the divisions of Heth and Wilcox, which were in position in face of the enemy on the right and left of the Plank Road, at right angles with it and about 3 miles below Parker's Store. Kershaw's division was in the lead, arriving in rear of the line held by these two divisions, and when the head of my column had filed to the right, and had only time to deploy two regiments of Kershaw's old brigade, an advance was made by the whole line of the enemy, and the divisions of Heth and Wilcox broke and retreated in some confusion. With considerable difficulty, but with steadiness, opening their ranks to let the retreating divisions through, Kershaw formed his line on the right and Field on the left of the Plank Road. Having checked the ad-

vance of the enemy, I ordered a general advance by my line, which was made with spirit rarely surpassed, and before which the enemy was driven a considerable distance. The woods were dense and the undergrowth almost impassable to penetrate. This success was not purchased without the loss of many of the bravest officers and men of my corps. The circumstances under which they fought were most unfavorable. Thrown suddenly,—while still moving by the flank, and when hardly more than the head of the column could face the enemy,—into the presence of an advancing foe with their ranks broken each instant by bodies of our retreating men, they not only held their own, but formed their line, and in turn, charging the enemy, drove him back in confusion over half a mile to a line of temporary works, where they were reënforced by reserves. About 10 o'clock Maj.-Gen. M. L. Smith and the other officers sent out to examine the enemy's position reported that the left of the enemy's line extended but a short distance beyond the Plank Road. Special directions were given to Lieutenant-Colonel Sorrel to conduct the brigades of Generals Mahone, G. T. Anderson, and Wofford beyond the enemy's left, and attack him on his left and rear (I have since heard that the brigade of General Davis formed a part of this flanking force), the flank movement to be followed by a general advance, Anderson's brigade on the right and Wofford's on the left, Mahone being in the center. They moved by the flank till the unfinished railroad from Gordonsville to Fredericksburg was reached. Forming on this railroad, facing to the north, they advanced in the direction of the Plank Road till they encountered the enemy in flank and rear, who was then engaging the brigades of Gregg, Benning, and Law in front. The movement was a complete surprise and a perfect success. It was executed with rare zeal and intelligence. The enemy made but a short stand, and fell back, in utter rout, with heavy loss, to a position about three-quarters of a mile from my front attack.

I immediately made arrangements to follow up the success gained and ordered an advance of all my troops for that purpose. While riding at the head of my column, moving by the flank down the Plank Road, I came opposite the brigades which had made the flank movement, and which were drawn up parallel to the Plank Road, and about 60 yards therefrom; when a portion of them fired a volley, which resulted in the death of General Jenkins and the severe wounding of myself.

The following extract from General Kershaw's report relates to the killing of General Jenkins and other casualties. He says:

Returning with General Wofford up the Plank Road, and learning the condition of things in front, we met the lieutenant-general

commanding coming to the front almost within musket range of the Brock Road. Exchanging hasty congratulations upon the success of the morning, the lieutenant-general rapidly planned and directed an attack to be made by Brigadier-General Jenkins and myself upon the position of the enemy upon the Brock Road before he could recover from his disaster. The order to me was to break their line and push all to the right of the road toward Fredericksburg. Jenkins' brigade was put in motion by a flank in the Plank Road, my division in the woods to the right. I rode with General Jenkins at the head of his command, arranging with him the details of our combined attack. We had not advanced as far as the position still held by Wofford's brigade when two or three shots were fired on the left of the road, and some stragglers came running in from that direction, and immediately a volley was poured into the head of our column from the woods on our right, occupied by Mahone's brigade. By this volley General Longstreet was prostrated by a fearful wound; Brigadier-General Jenkins, Capt. Alfred E. Doby, my aide-de-camp, and Orderly Marcus Baum were instantly killed.

As an instance of the promptness and ready presence of mind of our troops I will mention that the leading files of Jenkins' brigade on this occasion instantly faced the firing, and were about to return it; but when I dashed my horse into their ranks, crying, "They are friends!" they as instantaneously realized the position of things and fell on their faces where they stood. This fatal casualty arrested the projected movement. The commanding general soon came in person to the front, and ordered me to take position with my right resting on the Orange Railroad.

From "Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant" we quote as follows:

Hancock followed Hill's retreating forces, in the morning, a mile or more. He maintained this position until, along in the afternoon, Longstreet came upon him. The retreating column of Hill meeting reënforcements that had not been engaged, became encouraged and remained with them. They were enabled from the density of the forest to approach within a few hundred yards of our advance before being discovered. Falling upon a brigade of Hancock's corps thrown to the advance, they swept it away almost instantly. The enemy followed up his advantage and soon came upon Mott's division, which fell back in great confusion.

Longstreet had to leave the field, not to resume command for many weeks. His loss was a severe one to Lee, and compensated in a great measure for the mishap, or misapprehension, which had fallen to our lot during the day.

That battle of the Wilderness General Grant claims as one of his victories in the following words:

Our victory consisted in having successfully crossed a formidable stream, almost in the face of an enemy, and in getting the army together as a unit.

During the progress of the fight of the 5th and 6th between the infantry of the respective armies the cavalry did not remain idle. Vigilantly were the right and left flanks of our lines guarded by General Stuart and his troopers. Several severe engagements occurred, and there was one in which General Wilson, commanding a column of Federal cavalry, was roughly handled, and, to effect his escape, had finally to cut his way through our columns.

The 7th passed in comparative quiet; some skirmishing took place along the lines, and there was a little "shindy" between a division of the enemy and Ramseur's brigade while making connection with the left of Hill's corps. Our skirmishers occasioned the flight of the enemy, who had divested themselves of their knapsacks while fortifying, and generously left them by hundreds where they were most needed and appreciated.

Writing of the losses in the Wilderness sustained by the Federal army, the author of "Recollections of a Private Soldier in the Army of the Potomac," says:

The truth is that the privates of the army,—the volunteers without bounty, I mean,—never believed a report that was published from headquarters, unless it corresponded with the information the "Camp Walkers" had gathered. It was surprising how quickly important news relative to a battle or the campaign spread throughout the army.

We gathered from the losses these men enumerated in their own commands that the three days' fighting had cost Grant about twenty-five thousand men, or a little more than one-fifth of the army. And the enlisted men,—the volunteers who had brains in their skulls,—always insisted that these figures correctly represented the losses of Union soldiers in the bloody Wilderness battle.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE SPOTTSYLVANIA CAMPAIGN. MAY 9-12, 1864

SCARCELY had the "bloody Wilderness battle" ceased, before General Grant had determined upon turning our right and placing his army between our forces and Richmond. His calculation was made to reach Spottsylvania Court House, fifteen miles southeast of the battle-field, ahead of General Lee. Orders were issued by him on the morning of the 7th of May, and that night the movement commenced. Warren, in command of the Fifth Corps, took the van; he was followed by the Second and Sixth corps who moved on the Orange, Plank, and Turnpike Roads, while the Ninth corps brought up the rear.

There were many obstacles to the desired speed in movement; troops consumed time in falling into their places in the line of march, the cavalry failed to brush quickly aside a division of dismounted troopers who inconsiderately blocked thus detaining General Warren; so that it was late the next morning before Grant had a glimpse of the Court House, where General Longstreet's men were in waiting to interrupt his progress.

General Lee, having been notified by his ever-watchful Stuart, immediately adopted measures by which to thwart the intentions and expectations of his antagonist. To General Anderson, who was in command of Longstreet's corps, came orders to march by parallel roads to Spottsylvania Court House, to receive the enemy on his arrival. After a toilsome night-march, Anderson arrived in good time to assist Gen. Fitzhugh Lee in arresting the advance of the foe.

It was about 9 o'clock in the morning when the head of our troops, in sight of the Court House, espied the front of Warren's corps making their appearance along the Brock Road, with Lee's cavalry gallantly impeding their march. The brigades of Generals Kershaw and Humphrey were forwarded immediately to General Lee's assistance. Some hard fighting ensued, which after a while resulted in stopping the advance of the enemy. For two whole hours this bloody battle raged, a spirit of determination

being evinced alike in the Blue and in the Gray, until reënforcements reached our men, and enabled them temporarily to force back their antagonists.

The Court House had become occupied by a force of Federal cavalry, which General Field's division, moving by a detour, dislodged after a slight resistance; whereupon, the place was occupied by our men. Field then changing front to the left, moved to the right of Kershaw, and engaged the enemy. Later in the day there was another powerful effort made by the enemy in overwhelming force to carry our lines (at this time the entire Federal army was on the field), but the timely arrival of Rodes' division (Ewell's corps), and the proper disposition of our artillery by General Pendleton, chief of artillery, enabled us to foil their every attempt at advance, and having driven them back with heavy loss, to capture a large number of prisoners.

The lines were now selected for the army. Ewell's corps, who were all on the field when the day closed, took position on the right, and some of the soldiers busied themselves by erecting slight earthworks. The lines were well established by the next morning. Hill's corps, under command of General Early, was left at the Wilderness as rear-guard, and consequently did not reach the field that day.

It appears in the "War Records" that Longstreet's corps assisted by Rodes' division,—three divisions in all,—fought successfully the entire Army of the Potomac, and this, too, in the open field and without breastworks.

Of the day's operations General Meade, in his report, says:

In order to clear the roads, it was necessary to move the trains by daylight, which undoubtedly gave notice to the enemy; for early on the 8th of May Warren met Longstreet's corps on the Brock Road, near the crossing of the Po River, prepared to dispute the passage. Warren immediately attacked with Robinson's division,—that gallant officer being severely wounded early in the action,—pushing the enemy back and taking position in front of him near the Block House. The Sixth Corps was ordered up to take position on Warren's left, and the Second Corps posted at Todd's Tavern. All the corps were engaged at different times during the day. Miles' brigade, Second Corps, repulsing and driving a brigade of the enemy who attacked him at Corbin's Bridge. Wilson's division of cavalry succeeded in getting into Spottsylvania Court House, but it being impossible to get the infantry up to support him, he had to withdraw.

General Hill's corps, upon its arrival, took position on the right of Ewell. The lines were more fully established and fortified during the 9th. The artillery was so distributed as to command the largest extent of front possible under the circumstances, but the view was so obstructed by woods and bodies of field pine, as at the Wilderness, that only a limited number of guns could be utilized. Longstreet's corps occupied the line on the left, Ewell's on the center, and Hill's on the right. Both armies found employment throughout the day, each in developing the others' position and in strengthening their own works. Severe skirmishing took place at intervals. It was on this day that Maj.-Gen. John Sedgwick, the gallant commander of the Sixth corps, was killed by one of our sharpshooters. His fall was deplored by the men of both armies. He was a brave soldier.

When the morning of the 10th of May arrived it found the Federal forces in readiness to make herculean efforts for release from the topographical difficulties that had beset them ever since their passage of the Rapidan. A considerable portion of the territory occupied by them was covered with large bodies of timber and a heavy growth of field-pine and cedar, which rendered manœuvring with masses of troops a hazardous undertaking. On this day the assaults made by combinations of their forces were frequent and very determined. About 11 o'clock large columns, under command of General Warren, pressed heavily against our left center resulting in a fierce and bloody contest. Longstreet's men met them, and after severe fighting, repulsed them with great slaughter.

An attempt had been made earlier in the day to turn our left. General Hancock's corps had crossed the Po River, and, after a reconnoissance, discovered our position to be strongly fortified and well occupied. Before he could fully develop the position of our lines he received an order to move two of his divisions to his left and unite with Warren in an assault upon our front. Gibbon's division was immediately crossed to the north bank and formed on Warren's right. "Birney's division followed and was massed in reserve in rear of Warren's corps, leaving Barlow to hold the ground on the south side of the Po."

Just at this crisis, Heth's division of Hill's corps, which had been moved from our right, under General Early, with Richardson's battalion of artillery, and a section of Ellett's, pressed forward upon the position of Barlow's division near Glady Run, driving in their skirmishers and rushing impetuously upon their



position near the head of the bridge. This attack was repulsed, notwithstanding the ardor with which it was made; but returning to the assault, and greatly assisted by the rapid fire of our artillery, our opponents were forced back and driven from their position. We quote the following from General Hancock's report:

The last bloody repulse of the enemy had quieted him for a time, and during this lull in the fight General Barlow directed Brooks and Brown to abandon their position and retire to the north bank of the Po. Their right and rear enveloped in the burning wood, their front assailed by overwhelming numbers of the enemy, the withdrawal of the troops was attended with extreme difficulty and peril; but the movement was commenced at once, the men displaying such coolness and steadiness as are rarely exhibited in the presence of dangers so appalling. It seemed, indeed, that these gallant soldiers were devoted to destruction.

The enemy, perceiving that our line was retiring, again advanced, but were again promptly checked by our troops, who fell back through the burning forest with admirable order and deliberation, though in doing so many of them were killed and wounded, numbers of the latter perishing in the flames.

Brigadier-General Pendleton, General Lee's chief of artillery, says of this battle:

Early on this day Richardson's battalion accompanied Heth's division in a flank movement conducted by General Early around our left upon the enemy's right, and was severely engaged. A section of Ellett's battery, Pegram's battalion, accompanied Richardson's battalion in this expedition and did good service. As our troops in this movement came upon the enemy's flank they were met by a galling fire from a number of batteries he had there posted; and Cabell's guns, from their elevated position on our left, were directed by the general-chief of artillery to open upon those batteries, so as to draw their fire and aid Early's advance. The effect was as anticipated. Soon after McIntosh's guns, from the east bank of the Po, poured into the ranks of the enemy, retreating before General Early, a destructive fire; and some of the guns of this battalion, advancing with a portion of Mahone's division, as soon as the bridge was cleared, contributed still further to the good effect of the movement on that flank.

Later in the evening there were other attempts made to carry our lines. At 4 o'clock an assault was made by General Upton's brigade, supported by the brigade of General Mott, upon the

salient on General Ewell's front held by Doles' brigade. Advancing with impetuosity, they drove our skirmishers into the main line, and sweeping forward, carried the brigade front, capturing many prisoners and the artillery. This success, however, was of short duration; for Gordon's division, and Daniel's brigade, came to the rescue, and were quickly formed across the head of the assailant's column; while other Confederate troops, including in their number the "Stonewall Brigade," attacked them on the flanks. In a little while our enemies were driven from the works, and our lost guns, with the majority of the men taken prisoners, were recaptured. The losses sustained by both sides were heavy.

We extract from General Pendleton's report, in which he says:

In the afternoon the enemy, having massed a large force in front of the Second Corps' left, under cover of a pine thicket, made a sudden attack upon Doles' brigade, which, having no skirmishers out, in consequence of the close proximity of the lines, was taken entirely by surprise. The brigade gave way for a season, and the enemy entered our works and captured Smith's battery, of Hardaway's battalion. Our infantry, being soon rallied and reënforced, repulsed the enemy with considerable loss and recovered the guns. The captain had fought his battery until he was actually seized by soldiers from the enemy's ranks, and some of his men were carried off by the retreating foe and not recovered.

Thus the fighting continued, swaying from flank to flank. The small numbers (comparatively) of our ranks had necessarily to be moved back and forth from point to point, to meet the assaults at first one and then another body of the enemy. Warren's corps and two divisions of Hancock's made strenuous efforts to break the front of Longstreet's line, but were handsomely repulsed. In the evening, about half past six o'clock, they again advanced and made a very obstinate attempt to force our front, some of their men leaping our breastworks; but, like its predecessors, this assault was unsuccessful. This, the final effort on their part, closed the fighting for the day; and amid the gloom and smoke of the sanguinary battle-field the two armies rested for the night. The fullest report of these last assaults is that of General Hancock, who says:

At 5:30 p. m., when I returned to General Warren's front, I found the Fifth Corps and Gibbon's division, of the Second Corps,

engaged in an assault on the enemy's line in front of Alsop's house. The enemy held the crest of a densely-wooded hill, crowned by earthworks, his artillery and musketry sweeping his front. The approach to this position was rendered more difficult and hazardous by a heavy growth of low cedar trees, most of them dead, whose long, bayonet-like branches, interlaced and pointing in all directions, presented an almost impassable barrier to the advance of our lines. Here, as in the Wilderness, the woods prevented me from observing the conduct of the troops, although close to the point of attack; but it was soon evident that we had failed. The men struggled on bravely for a time, and even entered the enemy's breastworks at one or two points, but soon wavered and fell back in some confusion. I speak particularly of the troops engaged of my own corps, as I have not had a report of the operations of his troops from General Warren. Gibbon's division re-formed on the ground from which it had advanced to the attack. It lost heavily on this occasion.

I was directed by the major-general commanding to assault the enemy again at the same point at 6:30 p. m. My preparations for this attack had just been completed when I received an order from General Meade, by an officer of his staff, to defer my advance if the troops were not already in motion, and to move a strong force to the right of Barlow's position to oppose a heavy column of the enemy, which was reported to have crossed the Po and to be advancing on our right flank. I had scarcely given instructions for the execution of this order when it was countermanded and I was directed to proceed with the attack on the enemy's line in my front. The assault as formerly directed was then made by the Fifth Corps and portions of Gibbon's and Birney's divisions of the Second Corps. The troops encountered the same obstacles which had forced them to retire when they had assaulted this point at 5 p. m. They were again repulsed, with considerable loss. Ward's brigade retired in disorder until rallied by my own staff and that of General Birney. The heavy firing did not cease until 7:30 p. m.

The 11th of May was a rainy day. Our enemies required this entire day in which to collect their scattered columns for further advances. There was no fighting, except some sharp skirmishing; and our troops spent the day in resting. The great battle of the war was at hand. The movements in the afternoon of the Federal troops, who were making combinations preparatory to further aggressive advances, gave rise to the belief that they were withdrawing from our front. Of this General Pendleton says:

Late in the afternoon of this day the commanding general, having reason to believe the enemy withdrawing, and intending to leave him no time to gain distance upon us, directed the general chief of artillery to have brought back from the front line before it should be entirely dark all guns so situated as to be difficult to withdraw at night, so that everything might be ready to march at any hour. Under this order, General Alexander had his ammunition-chests in the trenches mounted on the caissons, and gun carriages taken to the vicinity of their guns, but retained the latter in position as the safest course. General Long, having a more difficult route for his artillery on Johnson's front,—by a narrow and intricate road through a wood,—preferred executing the order literally, especially as the night promised to be very dark. Nelson's and Page's battalions were accordingly withdrawn. This left unprotected an extensive salient of about a quarter of a mile across and nearly a mile around, which constituted the left of Johnson's line.

General Long says :

Late in the afternoon I received orders to have all the artillery which was difficult of access removed from the lines before dark, and was informed that it was desirable that everything should be in readiness to move during the night ; that the enemy were believed to be moving from our front. I immediately ordered all the artillery on Johnson's front, except two batteries of Kershaw's battalion, to be withdrawn, as it had to pass through a wood by a narrow and difficult road, and the night bid fair to be very dark. The withdrawal of the artillery proved to be very unfortunate, as the enemy, instead of retreating, massed heavily on Johnson's front during the night for the purpose of attacking.

The preparations of our enemies extended throughout the night, and their assaults began at daylight. The roar of the musketry became incessant, there being a general advance on their part. The columns of Warren and Burnside were easily repulsed. The main attack, made by Hancock's whole corps, was decidedly more brilliant. His troops came against the salient, held by Johnson's division of about 4000 men, and fairly ran over the picket lines. The artillery having been withdrawn the night before, it was an easy matter in the dim early light of a foggy morning for such a force,—numbering 25,000 men, to penetrate the lines held by a comparative handful of infantry, and enforce a surrender. It was not effected, however, without a struggle. Johnson's men fought with desperation,—bayonets and clubbed muskets being brought into requisition ; but the con-

test was too unequal to yield our little band of heroes success. The lines were taken, and the larger part of the division, with its general and other officers, made prisoners.

This turn of affairs occasioned one of the longest-fought and bloodiest battles of the war. The attacks of our men to regain the lost salient were continuous, and for nearly twenty hours the unequal contest raged. With the exception of the angle of the salient and a short space on either side, our whole line was recaptured. To force Hancock's sturdy men from the hold they had on this spot seemed an impossibility. It was ever known thereafter as the "Bloody Angle."

Extracts from the reports of those engaged will enable the reader to form clearer views of the terrors of war.

General Grant says:

Early on the morning of the 12th a general attack was made on the enemy in position. The Second Corps, Major-General Hancock commanding, carried a salient on his line, capturing most of Johnson's division, of Ewell's corps, and twenty pieces of artillery. But the resistance was so obstinate that the advantage gained did not prove decisive.

From Major-General Hancock's report the author quotes as follows:

Birney and Barlow's divisions moved out after dark, under the guidance of Major Mendell, of the engineers, over a narrow and difficult road during a heavy rain which rendered the marching extremely fatiguing for the men. The head of the column arrived at the Brown house, near which it was proposed to form the troops for attack about midnight; going into position as soon as they came up. Gibbon's division was also sent me, so that I had my whole corps available for the assault.

The direction in which our troops should advance was ascertained by a line, determined by a compass on the map, from the Brown house toward a large white house known to be inside the enemy's works, near the point we wished to strike. The formation was as follows: Barlow's division in two lines of masses was placed on the cleared ground which extended up to the enemy's line; Brooke's and Miles' brigades in the front line, Burns' and Smyth's in the second line, each regiment forming double column on the center. Birney's division formed in two deployed lines on Barlow's right. In front of him was a marsh and a dense wood of low pines. Mott's division formed in rear of Birney. Gibbon was in reserve. These preparations were scarcely completed at day-

light. A heavy fog decided me to delay the order for the assault to commence for a short time, until we should have sufficient light. I therefore waited until 4:35 a. m., when the order was given to advance. Birney had some difficulty in making his way through the marsh and wood in his front, but he pushed forward, overcoming all obstacles, keeping well up with Barlow's division, which moved at quick time for several hundred yards, his heavy column marching over the enemy's pickets without firing a shot, regardless of a sharp fire on its left flank from the enemy's picket reserve, which was posted on the high ground on which the Landrum house stands. It continued up the slope about half-way to the enemy's line, when the men broke into a tremendous cheer, and spontaneously taking the double-quick, they rolled, like an irresistible wave, into the enemy's works, tearing away what abatis there was in front of the intrenchments with their hands and carrying the line at all points in a few moments, although it was desperately defended. Barlow's and Birney's divisions entered almost at the same moment, striking the enemy's line at a sharp salient immediately in front of the Landrum house. A fierce and bloody fight ensued in the works, with bayonets and clubbed muskets. It was short, however, and resulted in the capture of nearly 4,000 prisoners of Johnson's division, of Ewell's corps, 20 pieces of artillery with horses, caissons, and material complete, several thousand stand of small arms, and upward of 30 colors. Among the prisoners were Maj.-Gen. Edward Johnson and Brig.-Gen. George H. Stuart, of the Confederate service. The enemy fled in great confusion and disorder. Their loss in killed and wounded was unusually great. The interior of the intrenchments presented a terrible and ghastly spectacle of dead, most of them were killed by our men with the bayonet when they penetrated the works. So thickly lay the dead at this point that at many places the bodies were touching and piled upon each other.

Our troops could not be restrained after the capture of the intrenchments, but pursued the flying enemy through the forest in the direction of Spottsylvania Court House, until they encountered a second formidable line of earthworks, the existence of which was before unknown to us. The assault and pursuit had, of course, broken our formation very much, but immediate efforts were made by the officers to collect the men and re-form their lines. My reserves were ordered to move up at once and directed to occupy the captured line of works.

The enemy in the meantime threw heavy reinforcements into the second line opposite to the point of my attack. They now advanced against our troops, who had been checked by their second line of intrenchments, and compelled them to retire to the line they had captured at daylight. Forming in the works on the right and left

of the salient, our troops resisted all attempts of the enemy to dislodge them.

About this hour, 6 a. m., the head of General Wright's corps (Sixth) arrived upon the field, his troops occupying the captured works on the right of the salient. They had scarcely gotten into position when the enemy assailed our lines with great vehemence, pressing the attack toward that portion of the line held by the Sixth Corps, which they appeared to be determined to regain. The right of my corps, Mott's division, now joined the Sixth Corps at the salient. Birney held the captured intrenchments on the left of Mott; Gibbon occupied the line on Birney's left, Barlow holding my extreme left. The enemy persisted in their attacks against the salient held by Birney, Mott, and the Sixth Corps. They advanced a very heavy force against this point, making repeated and desperate attempts to recover it. About 8 a. m. they pressed so fiercely against the Sixth Corps that General Wright sent to me for reinforcements. Having no other troops to spare, I sent Brooke's brigade of Barlow's division to his support, although it had taken part in the first assault of the morning and had been among the first troops to enter the works, where it was hotly engaged for several hours. Brooke had withdrawn his brigade when our reserve came up to re-form his line and replenish his ammunition. When General Brooke marched to reinforce the Sixth Corps, he was thrown forward on the front line of battle, where he relieved a portion of the troops of Wheaton's division. His brigade fought in this position, losing very heavily, until it had again exhausted its ammunition, when it was returned to me.

The enemy steadily continued his efforts to recapture the works he had lost, constantly pushing fresh troops forward for that purpose, but without success. The battle raged furiously and incessantly along the whole line from the right of the Sixth Corps to the left of Barlow's division throughout the day and until late in the night of the 12th, when the enemy desisted from my immediate front. A cold, drenching rain descended during this battle, in which the troops were constantly under heavy and destructive musketry fire for almost twenty hours.

Major-General Warren says:

At daylight General Hancock surprised Johnson's division in his lines and captured nearly all of it, with eighteen pieces of artillery. Enemy fought furiously to regain them. General Wright attacked near the Second Corps with two divisions. I also again assaulted the enemy's entrenchments, suffering heavy loss, but failing to get in. The enemy's direct and flank fire was too destructive. Lost very heavily. The enemy continuing to fire [on] the Second

and Sixth Corps [I was] compelled to withdraw Griffin's and Cutler's divisions and send [them] to the left to their support, where they again became engaged.

The report of Gen. I. A. Grant says:

I was ordered to the extreme left of the Second Corps (which was the extreme left of the Army of the Potomac) to relieve General Barlow's division from the front line. Upon arriving at the point designated, the brigade formed in two lines of battle, threw out skirmishers, and commenced fortifying under a brisk fire of musketry and artillery. The works and position just taken by the Second Corps were now held by the Sixth Corps, and the enemy was making desperate attempts to retake them, hurling forward troops in great force. The most desperate efforts were being made at a point near the center of the Sixth Corps, usually known as the Angle, to which point from the left we held the rebel works, and from which to the right the enemy held them.

It was found impossible, with the force at hand, to carry the works on the right by a direct attack, and that the enemy were gaining advantage at the Angle. Leaving the Fourth Vermont in command of General Wheaton, I went back to the Angle. About the same time Colonel Seaver came up from the left with the balance of the brigade, and it was all put into the engagement at that point except the Sixth Regiment, which was held in reserve in the rear of a swell of ground. This was a key-point to both armies, and the fighting was of the most desperate and determined character. This point held, and the whole line of works must necessarily fall into the hands of the victorious party. It was emphatically a hand-to-hand fight. Scores were shot down within a few feet of the death-dealing muskets. A breastwork of logs and earth separated the combatants. Our men would reach over the breastworks and discharge their muskets in the very face of the enemy. Some men clubbed their muskets, and in some instances used clubs and rails . . .

In this way the brigade was engaged for about eight hours, when it was relieved and marched to the rear. In this engagement our loss was heavy, but the point was held, and the whole line of rebel works fell into our hands. The slaughter of the enemy was terrible. The sight the next day was repulsive and sickening, indeed. Behind their traverses, and in the pits and holes they had dug for protection, the rebel dead were found piled upon each other. Some of the wounded were almost entirely buried by the dead bodies of their companions that had fallen upon them. Many of the dead men were horribly mangled, and the logs, trees, and brush exhibited unmistakable signs of a fearful conflict. The rebel account of a



tree over a foot in diameter being cut off by minie-balls is attested to by several Union officers.

Col. R. McAllister, commanding the first brigade, says :

In the advance and retreat to this point, regiments, brigades, and divisions, as well as corps, became somewhat mingled together, but to do justice, great credit is due to all, for each had their representatives in this fight and fought most gallantly. This place now became the assailing point, for the enemy retook the works to our right and determined to dislodge us. Their massed columns advanced again and again, and each time were driven back, but still the battle raged. Heavy masses of our troops held them in check and determined not to let them gain an inch. Irrespective of commands, the officers present moved forward troops to hold this point. Having now lost the entrenchments to our right, we formed a line in an obtuse angle, but line after line melted away before the enemy's fire, and it seemed almost impossible to hold the crest of the hill.

Had not the utmost exertions, bravery, and gallantry been displayed by the officers and men of the several organizations, we would have lost all that was gained that day. The cool bravery displayed there by both officers and men, as individuals, surpasses anything that I have witnessed in battle contests.

The following are from Confederate Reports.

General Ewell says :

Wednesday, May 11, it rained hard all day, and no fighting took place. Toward night the enemy were reported withdrawing from Anderson's front and were heard moving to our right. Scouts stated them to be returning to Fredericksburg. I received orders to withdraw the artillery, which was done along Johnson's front. Soon after midnight Major-General Johnson reported the enemy massing before him, and General Long was directed to return the artillery to the intrenchments, and General Gordon ordered to be ready to support Johnson. Different artillery was sent back, and owing to the darkness and ignorance of the location, it only reached the lines in time to be taken. The enemy attacked in heavy force at earliest dawn, and though gallantly resisted, their numbers and the want of artillery enabled them to break through our lines, capturing Maj.-Gen. Edward Johnson, Brig.-Gen. G. H. Stuart, about 2,000 men, and 20 pieces of artillery. The smoke of the guns and the mist kept the air dark until a comparatively late hour, thereby assisting the enemy, as he was enabled to mass his troops as he chose. They poured through our lines in immense numbers, taking possession to the right and left of the salient, and keeping up a constant fire of artillery and musketry for twenty-four hours.

General Gordon was heavily engaged,—one brigade broken, and its commander (Robert D. Johnston) wounded,—but he held his ground, drove out the enemy in his immediate front by a strong effort, and regained a portion of our works to the right of the salient. Their main effort was evidently against Rodes' position to the left of the Angle, and here the fighting was of the most desperate character. General Rodes moved Daniel's brigade from its works to meet the enemy. General Kershaw extended, so as to allow Ramseur to be withdrawn, and as Daniel's right was unprotected, Ramseur was sent in there. He retook the works to Daniel's right along his whole brigade front by a charge of unsurpassed gallantry, but the salient was still held by the enemy, and a most deadly fire poured on his right flank. Accordingly, Harris' (Mississippi) brigade, which came to my assistance about 9 a. m., was sent to Ramseur's right, but as it still failed to fill the trenches, McGowan's (South Carolina) brigade, which arrived an hour later, was ordered to the same point. Only part of this brigade succeeded in reaching the trenches and joining Harris' brigade. Spite of the terrible flank fire to which they were yet exposed, the brave troops of these three brigades held their ground till 3 a. m. of May 13, when ordered back to the new line. General Daniel was killed and General Ramseur severely wounded early in the day, but the latter refused to leave the field.

The nature of the struggle will be apparent from the fact that after the loss of Johnson's division (before sunrise) my force barely numbered 8,000, the reënforcements about 1,500 more. General Edward Johnson estimated the enemy's force at this part of the field at over 40,000, and I have every reason to believe this a moderate calculation. The engagement was spoken of in Northern papers as a general attack by their army. It was met only by my corps and three brigades sent to my aid, and after lasting with uninterrupted vigor from 4:30 a. m. till 4 p. m. of May 12, ceased by degrees, leaving us in possession of two-thirds of the works first taken from us and of four of the captured guns, which the enemy had been unable to haul off. These guns were withdrawn by hand to the McCool house, and General Long was directed to send after them at night. Major Page, whom he instructed to get them, left the duty to an ordnance sergeant, who failed to find them, and they were again allowed to fall into the enemy's hands.

As it was inadvisable to continue efforts to retake the salient with the force at my command, a new line was laid out during the day by General Lee's chief engineer some 800 yards in rear of the first, and constructed at night. After midnight my forces were quietly withdrawn to it and artillery placed in position; but his efforts and losses on the 12th seemed to have exhausted the enemy,

and all was quiet till May 18, when a strong force advanced past the McCool house toward our line.

Gen. J. B. Gordon says:

During the night of the 11th I received information from Major-General Johnson that the enemy was massing in his front, and under the general instructions I had received from corps headquarters, I sent another brigade (Pegram's) to report to him. At the earliest dawn I heard musketry in the direction of the salient, held by Jones' brigade, of Johnson's division, and at once ordered my other brigade (Johnston's) to move toward the firing. The situation at this time was as follows: Evan's brigade was in position immediately in rear of the left of Johnson's division and Rodes' right. Pegram's brigade was placed by General Johnson in the trenches near his left and to the left of the salient, and Johnston's brigade was moving from the Harris house toward the salient. The check given by Jones' brigade to the enemy's assaulting column was so slight that no time was afforded for the bringing into position the supporting force. No information was brought to me of the success of the enemy, and in the early dawn and dense fog I was unable to learn anything of the situation, until Johnston's brigade met in the woodland between the McCool house and the salient with the head of the enemy's column.

Brigadier-General Johnston was wounded, and his brigade was soon overpowered and driven back. I at once discovered that the situation was critical, and ordered Colonel Evans to move his brigade at a double-quick from its position near the trenches to the McCool house, and sent a staff officer to ascertain the position of Pegram's brigade, and, if possible, to withdraw it to the same point. This was promptly done. The fog was so dense that I could not ascertain the progress of the enemy, except by the sound of his musketry and the direction from which his balls came. At this point (the McCool house) I ordered Colonel Evans to send in three of his regiments to ascertain the enemy's position and check his advance until the other troops could be gotten into line. The attacking column, it was ascertained, had advanced considerably to the right of this point, and the temporary check given by these regiments afforded only time enough for moving the remainder of Evans' and Pegram's brigades farther around to the right. A line was soon formed near the Harris house, and these two brigades ordered to attack. They charged with the greatest spirit, driving the enemy with heavy loss from nearly the whole of the captured works, from the left of Wilcox's division to the Salient on General Johnson's line, and fully one-fourth of a mile beyond. Several of the lost guns were recaptured by the Thirteenth Virginia Regiment, of Pegram's brigade, and brought back to the branch near the Mc-

Cool house. Unfortunately, the artillery officer to whom these guns were reported failed to find them and bring them off. The enemy still held a portion of the line to the left of the Salient, and during the night of 12th the troops were withdrawn to a new line in rear of the Harris house. The loss in these two brigades was not heavy.

The striking disparity in numbers between the two armies engaged in this greatest of the battles fought between them is a fact that should ever be remembered and noted. The attack was made on Johnson's division by Hancock's corps,—25,000 men,—and the Sixth Corps and two divisions of the Fifth Corps, to be reckoned as 25,000 more. A total of 50,000 "veteran" troops! General Ewell's report in "War Records," says that opposed to this multitude were scarce 13,500 men, including the division of General Johnson, the greater portion of which was captured at daylight, which loss so greatly reduced the number of our troops that General Ewell says he had scarcely 8,000 men left until he was reënforced by three brigades numbering 1500 men.

There is, then, no reason for doubting, incredible as it may seem that less than 10,000 Confederates repulsed the advance of their enemies, and recaptured two-thirds of the lines that had been wrested from Johnson. And not only did they hold these lines, but they fought 60,000 Federal troops for upwards of twenty hours, inflicting upon them a loss of men equaling in number their own force. The great victory claimed by the "Numericals" in the morning was more than counterbalanced by subsequent losses in the course of the day.

Five men would naturally be expected to overcome one man under ordinary circumstances, but when one man successfully engages five men for twenty hours, and then leisurely retires from the field with fewer wounds than his five opponents, it could hardly be called a victory for the five men. If our army lost 10,000 men in killed, wounded, and captured, as General Hancock asserts in the figures of his report, surely the skill and determination of even 3500 Confederates would have been baffled and the lines lost, against such tremendous odds. Still, General Grant was not content, the odds were not yet sufficiently great,—he needed more men; and in his report, after mentioning the capture of Johnson's division, he continues: "The 13th, 14th, 15th, 17th, and 18th were consumed in maneuvering, and awaiting the arrival of troops from Washington."

The days of comparative quiet that succeeded the terrible

battle of the 12th were occupied in giving additional strength to our works, and in reorganizing the commands, some of which had been severely shattered. Changes, too, were made in the position of the troops, and the right extended by moving the corps of General Longstreet from the left to the right flank.

On the 18th of May there came another attempt to carry the front of General Ewell's corps by assault; but our artillery being in position, the advancing columns were opened upon by twenty-nine guns and so destructive did this concentrated fire prove, that the enemy broke ranks and fled to the rear, losing heavily. Our loss was comparatively nothing.

It was reported on the 19th that the enemy was moving to our right. In order to ascertain the correctness of this rumor, General Ewell received orders to make a demonstration in his front, but after consultation with the commander, he was permitted to move around the enemy's right flank. He crossed the Ny River with about 6000 troops, minus artillery, and made a detour of several miles through the woods. Having developed the enemy's position, and feeling satisfied that there was a considerable force in his front, he attempted to withdraw. While engaged in making this move, the enemy attacked him with a superior force. This compelled Ewell to form in line of battle in defense, which was successfully accomplished after a severe loss of men; and the enemy were held in check until nightfall; then our troops withdrew without molestation. This battle was the last fought at Spottsylvania.

In order to ascertain the views of the privates of the Federal army as to their losses, extracts are made, and here appended, from "Recollections of a Private Soldier in the Army of the Potomac," the writer of which says:

The Army of the Potomac has always longed for a fighting general,—one who would fight, and fight, and fight,—and now it has got him. But he does not seem to know that Lee's veteran infantry cannot be driven out of skilfully constructed earthworks by direct assault. I am afraid he will waste this army by dashing it against works that cannot be captured.

We estimated our losses up to this time at from forty-five thousand to fifty thousand men, or about two-fifths of the men whom Grant took across the Rapidan.

Every intelligent enlisted man in the Army of the Potomac knew that we could not wrest the Confederate entrenchments at Spottsylvania from Lee's veteran infantry.

General Grant, deeming it impracticable to attempt successfully any further assaults against our well-defined works at Spottsylvania, decided upon making another flank movement. On the 21st of May his troops began their march toward the North Anna River, with the hope of reaching that point in advance of General Lee; but in this they were mistaken, as upon their arrival they found our men in their front, ready to receive them and dispute the way. We had moved on the same day, and by the afternoon of the 22nd were all landed on the south bank of the river. The lines were marked out and the army took position for the third time across the front of the advancing Federals. From this date until the 27th the armies confronted each other. Sharp skirmishing and occasional heavy cannonading took place, but, as General Grant reports, "finding the enemy's position on the North Anna stronger than either of his previous ones, I withdrew on the night of the 26th to the north bank of the North Anna, and moved via Hanover town, to turn the enemy's position by his right."

The privates of his army also gave their verdict in regard to assaulting these lines erected by the tried veterans of General Lee's army; and for once the men agreed with their officers. Here is what they are reported to have said:

Battle-tried privates came into the battery and sneeringly inquired if the corps and army commanders had been to see our line. Of course we replied, "No." "Well," said one sergeant, of the Pennsylvania reserve, "I have fought in this army for three years, and in no other campaign have I seen so many general officers shirk as they have in this one. I saw the Confederate lines at close range last night," he added, "and they cannot be assaulted with any prospect of success. If Grant, or Meade, or Hancock, or Warren, or Wright, or Burnside, would inspect those works at close range, they would see the folly of staying here, where we are losing two hundred men every day by sharpshooters. We ought to get out of here and try it farther down." He but expressed what we all thought. At North Anna the rank and file of the Potomac Army, the men who did the fighting, and who had been under fire for three weeks, began to grow discouraged.

Before us, in the distance, rose the swells of Cold Harbor, and we marched steadily and joyfully to our doom.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Recollections of a Private.*

## CHAPTER XXXIX

THE CAVALRY AT YELLOW TAVERN. THE NORTH ANNA. COLD  
HARBOR: JUNE 3, 1864

WHILE the sanguinary engagement,—just described, —between the infantry and artillery of the two armies was in progress at Spottsylvania, the cavalymen of the Army of Northern Virginia were not laggards, fully realizing that the labor of no branch of the service was more essential than was theirs for the preservation of the well-being of their cause. Vigilantly they watched the flanks, noted all movements of importance made by their adversaries, and, through the expertness and valor of their scouts, communicated them without further delay to our commander.

Frequent encounters took place between the troopers of the contending armies that confronted each other; and many were the gallant deeds achieved,—deeds that will never be chronicled.

The position of our cavalymen was by no means a sinecure; but vastly outnumbered as they were by their opponents, equipped well or ill as war's chances permitted, their pluck indomitable and the firm conviction of the duty incumbent upon them formed the counterbalance in the opposite scale.

The ninth of May came and found another "On to Richmond!" raid by the Federal cavalry projected, and so the command fourteen miles long, in column by fours, under Gen. Phil Sheridan, crossed the North Anna River in the afternoon, having by a wide circuit cleared the right of our lines. The ostensible object of this expedition was to secure rations for his half-famished animals, but in point of fact, he was seeking an opportunity to capture Richmond by cutting off General Lee's communications.

Moving by way of Beaver Dam Station, which he destroyed, with all stores and public property found there, he crossed the South Anna on the 10th, at Ground Squirrel Bridge, continued his march by way of Ashland, and encamped about daylight on the 11th near Yellow Tavern, on the Brooke Turnpike, about six miles from Richmond.

General Stuart was soon made aware of Sheridan's route; so, detailing one small brigade, under General Gordon, to follow and harass the enemy's rear, he pushed forward with his two remaining brigades across the country in order to get in front of his foe. He reached Yellow Tavern on the morning of the 11th, and at once made the necessary disposition for battle. Wickham's brigade was deployed on the right,—his line facing the Mountain Road; Lomax, on the left, faced the Telegraph Road, while the battery of artillery, under Captain Breathed, was posted between Wickham's left and the right of Lomax, in readiness to sweep the front of both lines. In front were placed dismounted sharpshooters. Not long after this was effected, the enemy appeared, approaching rapidly, and our skirmishers were driven in.

As the enemy advanced Captain Breathed's guns opened a furious and destructive fire; but as these were insufficient to stay the charge, and to save the guns, they were sent to the rear. Wickham's men now came to the rescue, attacked vigorously on the right, and most gallantly repulsed the enemy. It was a fierce but unequal combat! The invaders were held in check the greater part of the day, and opportunity afforded the Richmond authorities to collect troops for the defense of the city.

About four o'clock in the afternoon came the crushing blow to the Confederate cavalry. The Mountain Road was suddenly blue with horsemen, their sabres flashing in the sunlight, as they thundered along toward our guns enshrouded in fire and smoke. The Confederates fought with desperation, sabre crossed sabre, pistols flashed continuously, and many a bold trooper fell. The odds, however, were too great. Our left gave way; and while being forced back, the dauntless Stuart, sword in hand, flew to his men and rallied them.

Again the conflict raged,—hand to hand,—with unabated stubbornness. Stuart led every charge, and temporarily the advance was checked. Re-forming his broken lines Sheridan recharged the guns that had been so destructive to his troops. Stuart, spurring his charger to the front of the guns, raised his hat, cheering as he waved it, then passed to the head of a column of his men who were coming to meet the charge. In a second, seemingly, the guns were in the hands of the foe, and the day was lost. Stuart rushed into the hottest of the fight; and calling upon his men to stand firm, fired his pistols into the faces of the advancing enemies, some of whom passed him in the charge. Then one of the enemy as he returned rearward, placed his pistol



almost against the general's body and fired; and the ball, entering Stuart's side, passed into his stomach. He was with difficulty kept from capture. Taken to Richmond, on the following day, May 12th, 1864, he obeyed the final call of the Great Commander.

Shortly before Stuart passed away, President Davis asked him:

"General, how do you feel?"

He replied:

"Easy, but willing to die, if God and my country think I have done my duty." His dying words were:

"I am going fast now, I am resigned; God's will be done."

As a cavalry leader, Maj.-Gen. J. E. B. Stuart had no equal. Gen. John Sedgwick said of him: "He was the best cavalry officer ever foaled in America." As a soldier he was rarely equalled; young, ardent, and "brave as the bravest," he was ever at the head of the charging column. His remarkable indifference to danger, his supreme coolness in the hour of greatest peril, and his unwavering presence of mind were invaluable to the service. His loss to the Army of Northern Virginia was irreparable.

After the fall of General Stuart, Sheridan, forcing his way through our lines, moved on toward Richmond. Driving in the outpost he demonstrated against the works near Mechanicsville Pike, and finding them very strong, he reports, "I gave up the intention of assaulting."

After several little combats with the Richmond troops, and parties of cavalry who were watching his movements, he wended his way to the White House, and after an absence of sixteen days he rejoined his army on the 24th of May.

#### THE NORTH ANNA

The Federals began their movement from Spottsylvania to the North Anna River on the 21st of May, and General Lee, ever on the alert, commenced on the same day to march his men thither. By the afternoon of the 22nd, we had crossed the river and were in front of the advancing Army of the Potomac. The extreme right of our line at Spottsylvania was at Standard's Mill, where the First Engineer Troops, C. S. A. (to which regiment the writer belonged) were posted as a support to Gen. Fitz Lee's cavalry. We withdrew from the lines at dusk, and were

being relieved by the cavalry when a demonstration was made against us by the enemy, and we had to run for the works, under fire, in order to repulse them. This repulse was soon accomplished, whereupon we moved out of the lines and started for Hanover Junction.

The army, having moved on, was far ahead of us, and we had to march expeditiously to overtake it.

At one o'clock on the morning of the 22nd we had traveled fifteen miles, and, strange to relate, not one man of the 800 was absent. It was noted by many at the time as a most remarkable fact.

On the same afternoon, our whole army was on the south bank of the North Anna, with the exception of some regiments that had been left in front of the Telegraph Road bridge to check the enemy.

While here the division of General Pickett, which had been long on detached service in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Southeast Virginia, reported for duty, and General Breckinridge's division, just returned from the Valley, also joined the army.

The advance of the enemy appeared, moving down the Telegraph Road, on the afternoon of the following day. Birney, in command of the van of the Second Corps, pushed his men forward, causing our men to fall back to the river; our artillery moved to the front, and until night, held the Federals in check. This point was the enemy's left; the Ninth Corps confronted us at Ox Ford, their center, while the Fifth Corps crossed at Jericho Ford, their right. The Sixth Corps was held in reserve. On our side, Ewell's command confronted that of Hancock; Longstreet's that of Burnside, and Hill's that of Warren.

As the Fifth Corps advanced on our left in an effort to gain the railroad, it was attacked by Heth and Wilcox, of Hill's corps, and driven back, with loss. The artillery was moved to the crest of the hill and opened a vigorous fire, to which the enemy's guns responded, and a brisk artillery combat ensued for a short time.

After nightfall the troops of our center and right receded further from the river and occupied a more advantageous position, where the lines were strongly fortified. The guns were assigned to sites selected for them, and the morning of the 24th found us ready to repel assaults. Few demonstrations were made; those that were, were too feeble to produce serious

result. Our lines were located in the shape of the letter V, with the point of the angle resting on the river, and the wings, or arms, of the letter thrown out at an obtuse angle, necessitating a double passage of the river to enable the enemy to reënforce from either of his wings; hence to attempt an attack was a hazardous business for them.

For several days the artillery and picket firing were sharp, but no assaults were made. On the 26th the next flank movement by the right was made by the enemy. There was no deterioration in the quality of our soldiers; when called upon to confront hordes of their adversaries, whose onward march to Richmond was being so persistently pushed, there were no laggards found among them. It was victory or death with them; freely their blood was shed for home and liberty. Face to face, muzzle to muzzle, they stood in defense of everything dearer than life.

We marched early on the morning of the 27th to the vicinity of Atlee's Station on the Virginia Central Railroad, where the main army bivouacked. When we arrived there the Federals had not made their appearance, having been held in check by our cavalry. The enemy, with Sheridan in advance, after crossing the Pamunkey, were met about midday of the 28th by Fitz Lee's division, near Haw's Shop, and after a fierce encounter were driven back upon their infantry. Our army then moved forward, and taking position on the south bank of the Totopotomy Creek, immediately threw up a line of breastworks. The men of the Second Corps, under command of General Early, took position in the vicinity of Pole Green Church, our right; the First Corps under General Anderson, our center, while the division of General Breckinridge, supported by the Third Corps, under General Hill, occupied the left.

On Sunday (May 29), the Second Corps (Federal) advanced to the creek by the Haw's Shop Road, Warren by the Shady Grove Church Road, and Wright occupied Hanover Court House. Skirmishing commenced on their arrival in our front, and during the night they threw up fortifications. On the afternoon of the 30th the attack against the enemy's right flank by General Rodes' division proved at first a success, as the Federals were driven back some distance, notwithstanding the extent to which they outnumbered us,—our one small division having attempted to beat Warren's whole corps. After nightfall we were forced to retire; but we did so in good order.

## COLD HARBOR

The lines continued to be extended on our right. Grant's men were in quest of weak points through which to effect entrance, while Lee's men were ever ready in their front to dispute their passage. Thus it continued until the 3rd of June, when the old battle-field at Gaines' Mill was occupied by the contending armies. These were days of incessant strife, at first one point and then another on the front and the flanks. Numbers on both sides were killed and wounded.

The first of June was a day of many battles. In attempting a strong movement by our right, Gen. Fitz Lee's cavalry had been forced back from Old Cold Harbor by the advance of the enemy's infantry; and as Hoke's and Kershaw's divisions were advanced, the enemy's position was developed. About 4 p. m., before all our troops could be properly deployed, an overwhelming assault was made upon the left of Hoke and the right of Kershaw. Through an opening between these divisions, screened by heavy woods, the enemy forced his way; which caused our men to throw back their lines and face the interval, thereby preventing the further advance of the enemy. The divisions of Pickett and Field were then pushed to the front, and a part of the lost ground regained.

During the progress of this battle the enemy's cavalry advanced on the left of our lines and were met by General Hampton, with Rosser's division and a portion of Gen. W. H. F. Lee's command coöperating with Rosser in this attack. They were badly beaten and driven toward Hanover Court House.

The same afternoon the left of our lines was assaulted; but General Hill, meeting the brunt of this attack with the efficient aid of the artillery, handsomely repulsed the foe. The day was one of great activity, these contests causing movements to and from the points assailed. The 2nd of June was another lively day. As the First and Ninth Corps of the Federal troops were on the march from their left to our right, preparatory to a grand assault upon that part of our lines, they were ferociously attacked by General Early,—with Ewell's corps and Heth's division,—and driven back, with considerable loss. General Warren, commanding the Fifth Corps of Federals, thus speaks of this attack:

In moving to this position we were attacked by the enemy with considerable vigor, and suffered some loss in General Crittenden's

division, which was bringing up the rear. The division held the enemy in check, however, until the other two divisions got into position and stopped his further advance. Soon after dark a sharp attack was made on the First Brigade of the Third Division, which brigade lost some ground.

General Lee says :

General Early, with Ewell's corps and Heth's division, occupied our left, and was directed to endeavor to get upon the enemy's right flank and drive [him] down in front of our line. General Early made the movement in the afternoon, and drove the enemy from his intrenchments, following him until dark. While this attack was progressing, General Hill re-enforced Breckinridge with two brigades of Wilcox's division, and dislodged the enemy from Turkey Hill, in front of our extreme right.

The attack on our right,—mentioned above, in the latter part of General Lee's dispatch,—was a successful fight on our side, giving us material advantage in strengthening that part of our lines. The last grand charge made by the enemy on this noted field took place on the 3rd. The entire Federal army, or as much thereof as the officers could induce to unite in the assault, were brought to test the strength of the Confederate works. At 4:30 a. m., or thereabout, the right of our lines, held by Generals Hoke and Breckinridge, was fiercely assailed, but the assailants were repulsed, with terrible slaughter. A salient on Breckinridge's front was carried and some of our men stationed therein were captured. They were not permitted to remain here long, as Finnegan's brigade and the Maryland Battalion immediately advanced and gallantly drove them out. Assaults were repeatedly made upon other portions of our front, but in each and all of them, our antagonists were decidedly worsted and driven back to the cover of their intrenchments.

The battles at this time were of short duration (not exceeding an hour), and the losses to the attacking forces amounting to more than 10,000 men. Those who composed the Federal ranks were so firmly convinced that our works could not be carried that later in the day, when orders were issued for the assaults to be renewed, they refused to budge an inch.

The whole army seemed to be greatly depressed the night before the battle of Cold Harbor.

"Can our men withstand the charge?" I asked myself. Quickly

I was answered. They came into sight, clambering over the parapet of the captured works. All organization was lost. They fled wildly for the protection of their second line and the Union guns, and they were shot by scores as they ran. The Confederate infantry appeared behind their works and nimbly climbed over, as though intent on following up their success, and their fire was as the fury of hell. We manned the guns and drove them to cover by bursting shell. How they yelled! How they swung their hats! And how quickly their pickets ran forward to their rifle-pits and sank out of sight! The swift, brave assault had been bravely met and most bloodily repulsed. Twenty minutes had not passed since the infantry had sprung to their feet, and ten thousand of our men lay dead or wounded on the ground.

About four o'clock in the afternoon I heard the charging commands given. With many an oath at the military stupidity which would again send good troops to useless slaughter, I sprang to my feet and watched the doomed infantry. Men, whom I knew well, stood rifle in hand not more than thirty feet from me, and I am happy to state that they continued to so stand. Not a man stirred from his place. The army to a man refused to obey the order, presumably from General Grant, to renew the assault. I heard the order given, and I saw it disobeyed. Many of the enlisted men had been up to and over the Confederate works. They had seen their strength and they knew that they could not be taken by assault, and they refused to make a second attempt.<sup>1</sup>

The following are extracts from official reports.

General Grant says:

On the 3rd of June we again assaulted the enemy's works in the hope of driving him from his position. In this attempt our loss was heavy, while that of the enemy, I have reason to believe, was comparatively light. It was the only general attack made from the Rapidan to the James which did not inflict upon the enemy losses to compensate for our own losses. I would not be understood as saying that all previous attacks resulted in victories to our arms, or accomplished as much as I had hoped from them, but they inflicted upon the enemy severe losses, which tended in the end to the complete overthrow of the rebellion.

General Meade says:

At 4 a. m., June 3, a vigorous assault was made by the Second, Sixth, and Eighteenth Corps. Barlow's division, Second Corps, carried a part of the enemy's line on our extreme left, but before

<sup>1</sup> *Recollections of a Private.*

Barlow could be reënforced, the enemy rallying compelled him to withdraw. The assaults of the Sixth and Eighteenth Corps being unsuccessful, about 11 a. m. offensive operations ceased. In the meantime Burnside had gained some advantage, reporting he had carried an advance line of the enemy. The losses on both sides in this attack were severe.

From General Hancock's report :

The attack was to be made by Barlow's and Gibbon's divisions, supported by Birney. Barlow formed in two deployed lines, the brigades of Miles and Brooke in the front line, and the other two brigades, Byrnes' and McDougal's, in the second line. Gibbon formed his division in two lines. The first deployed, consisting of Tyler's and Smyth's brigades, the second line of McKeen's and Owen's brigades in close column of regiments. Barlow advanced at the time indicated and found the enemy strongly posted in a sunken road in front of his works, from which they were driven after a severe struggle and followed into their works under a very heavy artillery and musketry fire. Two hundred or 300 prisoners, 1 color, and 3 pieces of artillery fell into our hands. The guns were turned upon the enemy, forcing them to retreat in confusion from that portion of the line. But this partial success of Barlow was speedily turned into a reverse by the failure of the second line to get up to the prompt support of the first, which was forced out of the captured works by the reënforced enemy, and an enfilading fire brought to bear on it. The troops of the first line showed a persistency rarely seen, and, taking advantage of a slight crest, held a position within from 30 to 75 yards of the enemy's line, covering themselves in an astonishingly short time by rifle-pits.

General Lee in a dispatch to the Secretary of War, says :

Our loss to-day has been small, and our success, under the blessing of God, all that we could expect.

Thus ended the battle of Cold Harbor. Later in the day several charges were undertaken by our adversaries,—charges that were easily repulsed, and general quietude reigned,—with the exception of picket firing and an occasional cannon shot,—until June 12th, when General Grant made another movement to our right, which landed him with his army in front of Petersburg.

## CHAPTER XL

THE BATTLE OF DRURY'S BLUFF. MAY 13-15, 1864

**I**N order to revert to some of the minor operations of our adversaries, predicated upon the "Grand onward march of the Army of the Potomac," the movements of Grant's and Lee's armies must be resumed later.

Maj.-Gen. B. F. Butler, under General Grant's instruction, had moved his main force up the James River on the 4th of May, and took possession (without any opposition) of City Point (junction of the James and Appomattox Rivers) and Bermuda Hundred, located on the south side of the James River, north of City Point. He telegraphed (May 9) the following dispatch to Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War, Washington, D. C.:

Beauregard, with a large portion of his force, was left south by the cutting of the railroads by Kautz. That portion which reached Petersburg under Hill I have whipped to-day, killing and wounding many and taking many prisoners, after a severe and well-contested fight. General Grant will not be troubled with any further reënforcements to Lee from Beauregard's force.

General Grant in his report says of General Butler's military feats at this time:

On the evening of the 13th and morning of the 14th, he carried a portion of the enemy's first line of defenses at Drewry's Bluff, or Fort Darling, with small loss. The time thus consumed from the 6th lost to us the benefit of the surprise and capture of Richmond and Petersburg, enabling, as it did, Beauregard to collect his loose forces in North and South Carolina, and bring them to the defense of those places. On the 16th, the enemy attacked General Butler in his position in front of Drewry's Bluff. He was forced back, or drew back, into his intrenchments between the forks of the James and Appomattox Rivers, the enemy intrenching strongly in his front, thus covering his railroads, the city, and all that was valuable to him. His army, therefore, though in a position of great security, was as completely shut off from further



operations directly against Richmond as if it had been in a bottle strongly corked. It required but a comparatively small force of the enemy to hold it there.

On the 12th of May General Beauregard arrived at Petersburg from the south, and assumed the command of all the forces at that point. The Federal cavalry, on that same day, under command of Gen. August W. Kautz, began a raid on the Danville Railroad. After striking the road at Coalfield, he proceeded to Powhatan and Chester Stations, burning and destroying all bridges, tracks, and stores, wherever found in his route. Passing over to the Southside Railroad, where he demolished several stations and a portion of the tracks, he pursued his march thence to City Point, and arrived there on the 18th. This raid on the part of the enemy withdrew from Petersburg and the South side of the James River many of our troops that had been sent to protect certain important bridges in the neighborhood of Amelia Court House. Between some of these troops and the raiders several contests had taken place,—brushes that resulted in repulse and severe loss to the enemy. Our lines having been thus weakened, General Butler attacked them on the 13th and 14th of May, and captured them. On the 15th, General Beauregard massed his forces in front of the enemy, who occupied our outside lines, and made his arrangements to attack and recapture them.

The lines of our adversaries extended from in front of Drury's Bluff,—their right,—to a point some distance west of the Turnpike, their left, Port Walthall Junction being within their lines. Their forces were composed of the Tenth and Eighteenth Corps.

The Confederate army consisted of Hoke's division which occupied the right, and confronted the enemy's left; Ransom's division, in front of Drury's Bluff, on our left, and Colquett's division, composing the reserve, with its center on the Turnpike in the rear of our right. The cavalry, few in number, kept an eye on the flanks of the lines.

Had General Beauregard's masterly plan of battle and the orders to General Whiting's command been carried out at the time specified, the Army of the James would in all probability have been captured, or, at any rate, demoralized beyond re-formation. General Beauregard's order to General Whiting was "to march from Petersburg to Port Walthall Junction, and attack

the enemy in rear and on the flank." In his circular of instructions to his division commanders he says:

The purpose of the movement is to cut off the enemy from his base of operations, at Bermuda Hundred, and capture or destroy him in his present position.

His plan of attack was as follows:

That our left wing turning and hurled upon Butler's weak right should with crushing force double it back on its center, thus interposing an easterly barrier between Butler and his base; that our right wing should, simultaneously with its skirmishers, and afterward in force, as soon as the left became fully engaged, advance and occupy the enemy to prevent his reënforcing his right and thus form his northern barrier, without, however, prematurely seeking to force him far back before our left could completely out-flank him and our Petersburg column close up on his rear; and, finally, that the Petersburg column, marching to the sound of heaviest firing, should interpose a southern barrier to his retreat. Butler, thus environed by three walls of fire, with his defeated troops, could have no resource against substantial capture or destruction, except in an attempt at partial and hazardous escape westward, away from his base, trains, or supplies.

So dark was the morning of the 16th of May, and of so great intensity was the fog, that it was almost impossible for the eye to penetrate the region about to any extent; "and we were only aware that it was filled with our friends preparing for the desperate struggle ahead by the clear and distinct words of command from invisible officers marshalling an invisible host."

It was about 4:45 a. m. when the brigades of Gracie, Kemper (commanded by Gen. W. R. Terry), Barton, and Hoke (under Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis), with Colonel Lightfoot's artillery, and a small body of cavalry, under Colonel Dunovant,—the whole under the command of General Ransom,—moved forward to the attack. Gracie led on the left, supported by Terry, while Hoke moved on the right of Gracie, supported by Barton. The battery of Major Boggs moved with the right columns.

It was not long before our skirmishers encountered those of the enemy; a brisk fire of musketry ensued, and the Federals were driven back. In a short time the main lines became engaged, and the contest opened fiercely, raging for several hours at this point and resulting finally in our enemies being driven out of their works, of which our men took possession.

The heavy mist still canopied the field; our lines halted to receive ammunition, and for readjustment; and, while thus occupied, the foemen advanced, making so strong an attack upon the left of Hoke's brigade as to cause it to break and relinquish a part of the line. The Twenty-fourth Virginia, of Terry's brigade, hurriedly dispatched to Hoke's support, succeeded in holding the enemy in check until the arrival of Colquitt's brigade (of the reserve force); which attacked him most energetically, forcing him back.

The lines, having been made perfect, were in readiness for the advance. However, instead of advancing, orders were received about 10 o'clock from the commanding general to halt and await further orders.

In the meantime the movements made on the right, under the supervision of General Hoke,—in command of the brigades of Haygood on the left, next to whom came Johnson and then Clingman, with General Corse on the right,—were in concert with those on the left. Heavy lines of skirmishers were pushed forward by daylight, and these engaged the enemy. The main line was slow in its advance, in accordance with the orders received and on account of impediments occasioned by the mist; but when the collision between the opposing lines took place, the fighting was hard and sanguinary.

During this engagement, one of the enemy's batteries, consisting of five pieces, located in front of Hoke's left, became excessively annoying, so with the ardor of a Napoleon, our brave Haygood, of South Carolina, determined to capture it. Forming his brigade in front of the works filled with foemen, he gave the order to advance, and his command of South Carolina's hardy veterans rushed onward, with overpowering *éclat*, and, in an incredibly short space of time, drove the enemy out of their works and from their guns,—capturing the five pieces and a few prisoners. This grand success was achieved, with little loss, by a very rapid charge.

As the day progressed, the Federals were driven from a portion of their second line of works, but there being no supports at hand to strengthen the brigade,—as the regiment on its left, having been heavily pressed on its flank, had fallen back,—Haygood had necessarily to retire to his former position; but this he did not do until he had held his lines for a considerable time, suffering severely.

Johnson's brigade had well performed its part, and assisted

Haygood in repulsing and driving the Federals out of their works. Corse and Clingman were heavily engaged on the right, and filled their part of the programme in bringing about the discomfiture and retreat of the enemy.

From some hindering cause the Petersburg column was not in time for its presence to be effective in the general grand results of the day. The enemy fell back until all the ground he had held in the morning was vacated, and his forces were sheltered behind his lines at Bermuda Hundred. Our army advanced and threw up a line of works that completely shut up the Army of the James; and this was the method adopted by Beauregard to cork the mouth of the bottle in which Butler was ensconced at Bermuda Hundred. Of this battle General Haygood in his official report says:

My command occupied the left of our second, or intermediate, line, embracing Fort Stevens, and with its right on the turnpike. The enemy occupied our exterior line of breastworks, which had been previously abandoned, supported by a battery of five pieces, where the turnpike crosses these works, with skirmishers well thrown toward us. They had also constructed a second line of works in rear of this at some 200 yards' distance, and had entangled the abatis between the two lines with wire.

Shortly after General Ransom's division had engaged the enemy on my left, and while his advance was still parallel to my line, I was ordered to advance and drive the enemy from our outer line of works. This was happily accomplished, under cover of the early daylight, without serious loss, the brigade capturing the battery of five pieces before referred to and several prisoners. My men now occupied this outer line, a desultory exchange of shots going on between it and the second line of works. Three companies of the Twenty-fifth Regiment, on my extreme right, were also at this time thrown back perpendicular to my front, to assist by a flank fire Johnson's brigade, which was driving the enemy from the portion of the outer line on my right.

General Ransom's division had now, in accordance with the plan of battle, advanced some 300 yards in front of my left and was pivoting its right, to sweep the enemy by a flank attack from the woods and works in front of our center. At this time I was ordered by the division commander to change front forward to the right and form line of battle parallel to the turnpike. In accomplishing this, my left drove the enemy from that portion of their second line of works, which it struck, and the whole movement was much impeded by the abatis and wire entanglement referred to. I now held the turnpike with my line at right angles to

the general line of battle, General Ransom's division advancing *en échelon* full 800 yards upon and in rear of my left, the enemy firing obliquely upon my rear from the woods between General Ransom and myself, and I was immediately attacked by a heavy force in my front. The position was obstinately held, in the hope that the advance of the division on my left and the brigade on my right would relieve me. Seeing, however, that the brigade was suffering severely, and the regiment on the left having, under orders of its colonel (properly given under the circumstances), begun to retire from the heavy pressure of the enemy upon the flank, I directed the resumption of our former position, behind our outer line of works. The enemy almost immediately retreated from my immediate front.

General Hoke speaks thus of the part taken by the brigades of Corse and Clingman:

They went forward in good style, and drove the enemy from their front, but owing to the superior numbers and strong entrenchments, they were not able to drive them entirely from their positions.

The Commanding General will recollect that I before stated that the strength of the enemy was in front of these two brigades, both in position and forces, and therefore great credit should be given them for their actions. They were both small commands, but did their duty well. At the time the attack was made the enemy felt as if our forces were coming on them from all sides, and commenced retreating hastily. The losses of these commands were necessarily heavy, owing to a front attack.

The aggregate losses of the Confederates were so far,—as reported,—2506. The losses of the Federals from May 5th to 31st, including the battle of Drury's Bluff, aggregated 5958. ("War Records.")

## CHAPTER XLI

THE VALLEY CAMPAIGNS. MAY-JULY, 1864

**T**HE enemy commenced his advance in the Kanawha and Shenandoah valleys about the 1st of May, moving in several columns, under command of General Franz Siegel.

Upon Brigadier-General Crook devolved the charge in Kanawha. He, marching his forces by way of Fayetteville and Princeton, proceeded to operate against the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. His army numbered 8600 men, of all arms. Gen. W. W. Averell, commanding about 2000 picked cavalymen, was sent by way of Logan Court House to Saltville (which he never reached), and thence to Dublin, with full instructions to destroy the railroad and all property whose destruction would render that section untenable by the Confederates.

General Crook's column moved onward until it reached the vicinity of Dublin, where it was met by a comparatively small body of Confederates, under command of Brig.-Gen. A. G. Jenkins, who were posted on the mountain, at Cloyd's farm. This was on the 9th. The Federals made immediate preparation for battle, moved forward their columns, and attacked the Confederate lines with great spirit. This battle continued several hours; our men were driven back, with severe loss,—withdrawing to Dublin and from thence to New River bridge, where a stand was made. Being, however, flanked by the enemy, they continued their march through Christiansburg to Big Hill,—several miles west of Salem,—where they arrived on the 11th. The forces of the enemy exceeded ours in numbers more than two to one, and to this our defeat was in a great measure attributable.

According to the "War Records," the Union casualties were 688, the Confederate 538.

General Averell's command was intercepted by Colonels French and Jackson, at Gap Mountain, and sent flying into the mountains; it eventually reorganized, and on the 16th joined Crook's force.

The main army of the Federals,—some 10,000 men, of all arms, commanded by General Siegel,—wended their way up the Shenandoah Valley, and on the 15th of May was confronted near New Market by General Breckinridge, with less than 3000 men. Attached to this column was the Battalion of Cadets, from the Virginia Military Institute,—were mere youths, but their superb gallantry in the battle which followed won for them tributes of praise and admiration from all quarters. The fact that 8 of them were killed and 44 were wounded furnishes ample testimony to their fearless behavior in the face of the enemy. Siegel's men fought with remarkable *prestige* in the outset, having driven our small cavalry force for a while; but when the full strength of our arms developed, and the highest note of the Confederate soldiers' yell was emitted in the charge, Siegel's lines wavered, and finally breaking to the rear, left their dead and wounded in our hands.

General Grant, in his official report, refers to this engagement in the following words:

General Siegel moved up the Shenandoah Valley, met the enemy at New Market on the 15th, and, after a severe engagement, was defeated with heavy loss, and retired behind Cedar Creek. Not regarding the operations of General Siegel as satisfactory, I asked his removal from command, and Major-General Hunter was appointed to supersede him.

Union casualties, according to Siegel's report, were 650. Those of the Confederates are estimated at 400.

After this battle, General Breckinridge's command was ordered to Hanover Junction, to reënforce the Army of Northern Virginia.

General Hunter, immediately upon assuming command, moved onward up the Valley, and having arrived on the 5th of June near Port Republic, his advance cavalry met ours, when a sharp skirmish ensued. Our force was driven back upon Piedmont, a village about 11 miles east of Staunton. At this point the Confederates,—numbering from 3000 to 4000 men, of all arms,—under command of Brigadier-General Jones, met the advancing Federals, and after defending their position most gallantly, and repulsing several fierce charges of their assailants, our line fell back with heavy loss. General Jones was among the killed, and Brig.-Gen. J. C. Vaughn took command, retreating in the direction of Waynesboro.

By this defeat of our small army the country from Staunton to Lynchburg was left open to the invasion of the enemy, which was a matter of serious import, as that region was one of the sources of supply for our army near Richmond; therefore General Lee took speedy steps to counteract the effects of that engagement.

On the 10th of June the division of General Breckinridge, about 2500 strong, was dispatched to Charlottesville and thrown into the gaps of the Blue Ridge Mountains west of the city. The corps of Ewell, under General Early (8,000 men) was detached on the 13th and sent to follow the forces of Breckinridge.

Upon his arrival at Charlottesville General Early received information that Hunter, who had from 20,000 to 30,000 men at command (Crook and Averell having both joined him), was moving en route for Lynchburg, by way of Lexington and Buchanan. Availing himself of the cars on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, he passed rapidly on toward Lynchburg, arriving in time to save the city. With the besom of destruction, Hunter's troops had swept their trail from Staunton to Lynchburg. Each railroad and public building on his route,—including the Virginia Military Institute, at Lexington,—stores of every kind, the major portion of the manufacturing establishments anywhere within his range, were consigned to the torch, and totally wrecked.

General Hunter arrived in front of Lynchburg on the morning of the 18th of June, and made his arrangements for an attack. As his columns pushed forward he found our works well manned; and ascertaining also that his opponents were of the veteran corps of Ewell, he decided to retreat. After dark of the same day he made his movement to retrace his steps on the route by which he had come, and did so until he reached Salem. Here he was overtaken by a portion of Early's troops, and his retreat, which had been more rapid than graceful, became a disorganized rout, causing him to seek safety in flight through the mountains to the Ohio River. The casualties of the Unionists were 940. Those of the Confederates are estimated at 1600.

General Grant dispatched General Sheridan on the 7th of June on an expedition against the Virginia Central Railroad, and also gave him instructions to General Hunter, who, it was supposed, would be found at Charlottesville. The object of the great Federal commander was the general destruction of all property that might be available to the use of the Confederate authorities in



the country between his army and the Potomac River. After uniting at Charlottesville, and obeying instructions, the two columns were to return to the Army of the Potomac. But

The best laid schemes o' mice and men  
Gang aft agley.

As we have seen, General Hunter did not arrive at Charlottesville, and as we will see, neither did General Sheridan. The activity of our soldiers (few as they were in comparison), under the skilful guidance of energetic officers, prevented the fulfilment of the great general's wishes. General Lee, having information of the advance of the Federal cavalry early on the 8th, issued orders for Gen. Wade Hampton to take his own command and Gen. Fitzhugh Lee's division of cavalry in rapid pursuit.

The sequence of these movements of Union and Confederate bodies of cavalry is to be found in General Hampton's official report, from which we quote the following:

Supposing that he would strike at Gordonsville and Charlottesville, I moved rapidly with my division so as to interpose my command between him and the places named above, at the same time directing Maj.-Gen. Fitzhugh Lee to follow as speedily as possible. In two days' march I accomplished the object I had in view,—that of placing myself in front of the enemy,—and I encamped on the night of the 10th in Green Spring Valley, 3 miles beyond Trevilian Station, on the Central Railroad, while Gen. Fitzhugh Lee encamped the same night near Louisa Court House. Hearing during the night that the enemy had crossed the North Anna at Carpenter's Ford, I determined to attack him at daylight. General Lee was ordered to attack on the road leading from Louisa Court House to Clayton's Store, while my division would attack on the road from Trevilian Station to the same point. By this disposition of my troops I hoped to cover Lee's left and my right flank; to drive the enemy back if he attempted to reach Gordonsville by passing to my left, and to conceal my real design, which was to strike him at Clayton's Store after uniting the two divisions.

At daylight my division was ready to attack at Trevilian, Butler's and Young's brigades being held for that purpose, while Rosser was sent to cover a road on my left. Soon after these dispositions were made, General Lee sent to inform me that he was moving out to attack. Butler was immediately advanced, and soon met the enemy, whom he drove handsomely, until he was heavily reënforced and took position behind works. Young's brigade was sent to reënforce Butler, and these two brigades pushed the enemy

steadily back, and I hoped to effect a junction with Lee's division at Clayton's Store in a short time; but while we were driving the enemy in front it was reported to me that a force had appeared in my rear. Upon investigation I found this report correct. The brigade which had been engaging General Lee having withdrawn from his front, passed his left and got into my rear. This forced me to withdraw in front and take up a new line. This was soon done, and the brigade [Custer's] which had attacked me in rear was severely punished, for I recalled Rosser's brigade, which charged them in front, driving them back against General Lee, who was moving up to Trevilian, and capturing many prisoners. In this sudden attack on my rear the enemy captured some of my led horses, a few ambulances and wagons, and three caissons. These were all recaptured by Generals Rosser and Lee, the latter taking in addition four caissons and the headquarters-wagon of Brigadier-General Custer. My new line being established, I directed General Lee to join me, with his command, as soon as possible. The enemy tried to dislodge me from my new position, but failed, and the relative positions of the opposing forces remained the same during the night.

The next day, at 12 m., General Lee reported to me, and his division was placed so as to support mine, in case the enemy attacked.

At 3:30 p. m. a heavy attack was made on my left, where Butler's brigade was posted. Being repulsed, the enemy made a succession of determined assaults, which were all handsomely repulsed.

In the meantime General Lee had, by my direction, reënforced Butler's left with Wickham's brigade, while he took Lomax's brigade across to Gordonsville Road, so as to strike the enemy on his right flank. This movement was successful and the enemy, who had been heavily punished in front, when attacked on his flank fell back in confusion, leaving his dead and a portion of his wounded on the field. I immediately gave orders to follow him up; but it was daylight before these orders could be carried out, the fight not having ended until 10 p. m. In this interval the enemy had withdrawn entirely, leaving his dead scattered over the whole field, with about 125 wounded on the ground and in temporary hospitals. We captured, in addition to the wounded, in the fight, and the pursuit 570 prisoners. My loss in my own division was 59 killed, 258 wounded, and 295 missing; total, 612.

The enemy in his retreat crossed the river at Carpenter's Ford, and kept down on the north bank of the stream.

During several days while we marched on parallel lines I constantly offered battle, while he studiously declined, and he followed the northern bank of the Mattaponi and the Pamunkey until he

gained the shelter of his gun-boats, on the latter, at the White House, where he crossed during the night. Here he met a strong reënforcement, with supplies, and after resting a day he moved down the river, thence across the country to the Gorge Bridge, where he crossed the Chickahominy. Chambliss' brigade, which had joined me two days previous, attacked him at this point and drove him some distance. Fearing that he might pass up the James River, through Charles City Court House and Westover, I took position that night so as to cover the roads from Long Bridge to the latter place.

The next morning, June 24, he drove in my picket at Samaria (Saint Mary's) Church and advanced beyond Nance's Shop. I determined to attack him, and to this end I ordered Brigadier-General Gary, who joined me that morning, to move from Salem Church around to Smith's Store and to attack on the flank as soon as the attack in front commenced. General Lee left Lomax to hold the river road, and brought Wickham to join in the attack. The necessary arrangements having been made, General Gary advanced from Smith's Store and took position near Nance's Shop. The enemy had in the meantime thrown up strong works along his whole line, and his position was a strong one. As soon as Gary had charged the enemy Chambliss was thrown forward, and by a movement handsomely executed, connected with him, and the two brigades were thrown on the flank of the enemy. At the same moment the whole line, under the immediate command of Maj.-Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, charged the works of the enemy, who, after fighting stubbornly for a short time, gave way, leaving his dead and wounded on the field. This advance of our troops was made in the face of a very heavy fire of artillery and musketry, and it was most handsomely accomplished. As soon as the enemy gave way I brought up the Phillips and the Jeff. Davis Legions (mounted), ordering them to charge. This they did most gallantly, driving the enemy for three miles in confusion. Robbins' battalion and the Twelfth Virginia Cavalry were mounted and participated in a part of this charge, in which Lieutenant-Colonel Massie, commanding the latter, was wounded while gallantly leading his men over the works of the enemy. The enemy was completely routed and were pursued to within  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles of Charles City Court House, the pursuit lasting till 10 o'clock at night. We captured 157 prisoners, including 1 colonel and 12 commissioned officers, and the enemy left their wounded, amounting to quite a large number, scattered over the ground upon which we had fought. My loss was 6 killed and 59 wounded in my own division.

Casualties (admitted) sustained during this campaign by the Federals, 1512; those of the Confederates are estimated at 1100.

The preponderance of numerical forces engaged was as 2 to 1 in favor of the Unionists. General Sheridan was at last successful in reaching the James River, which he crossed, reaching the south side on the 25th or the 26th of June.

After General Early had driven General Hunter's columns into the Kanawha Valley, he turned his steps down the Shenandoah Valley toward Maryland. His army, including General Brickeridge's division and the cavalry, could not be termed a large one, as he could muster not over 12,000 effective men. Notwithstanding the inadequacy of such a force for such an undertaking, he determined to move on. His route from Salem to the Potomac River, by way of Staunton, covered a distance of nearly 200 miles; this fact, however, did not seem to effect his purpose. His "fast cavalry" were equal to any emergency, and the movement progressed rapidly.

Reaching Staunton on the 29th of June, a brief halt was made for the purpose of securing such supplies as were necessary for such a campaign. This effected, the columns resumed their march forward. Upon their arrival at Winchester they ascertained that Harper's Ferry and Martinsburg were both in the occupancy of the enemy's forces. Demonstrations made upon these points resulted in the enemy's evacuating them without a fight, and falling back upon Maryland Heights.

Our troops crossed the Potomac River at Shepherdstown on the 5th of July, and advanced to Sharpsburg. On the morning of the 9th Frederick City was reached, and soon thereafter followed the battle of the Monocacy. In the subjoined extracts from the report of General Jubal A. Early, a full detail of what followed is furnished. He says:

I found Wallace in force at Monocacy Junction, his force being stated in Northern accounts at 10,000, and consisting in part of the Third Division, of the Sixth Corps, under Ricketts, which had arrived the day before. This force we attacked on the afternoon of the same day; Ramseur demonstrating in front, while Gordon moved across the Monocacy on the enemy's flank by a route which had been opened by McCausland's brigade of cavalry in a very gallant manner. The enemy in a very short time was completely routed by Gordon, and left the field in great disorder, and retreated in haste on Baltimore.

In this action our entire loss was between 600 and 700, including the cavalry; but I regret to say Brigadier-General Evans was wounded and some gallant officers killed.

On the morning of the 10th I moved toward Washington, taking the route by Rockville, and then turning to the left to get on the Seventh-street Pike. The day was very hot and the roads exceedingly dusty, but we marched thirty miles.

On the morning of the 11th we continued the march, but the day was so excessively hot, even at a very early hour in the morning, and the dust so dense, that many of the men fell by the way, and it became necessary to slacken our pace. Nevertheless, when we reached the right of the enemy's fortifications the men were almost completely exhausted and not in a condition to make an attack. Skirmishers were thrown out and moved up to the vicinity of the fortifications. These we found to be very strong and constructed very scientifically. They consist of a circle of inclosed forts, connected by breastworks, with ditches, palisades, and abatis in front, and every approach swept by a cross-fire of artillery, including some heavy guns.

I determined at first to make an assault, but before it could be made, it became apparent that the enemy had been strongly reënforced, and we knew that the Sixth Corps had arrived from Grant's army, and after consultation with my division commanders I became satisfied that the assault, even if successful, would be attended with such great sacrifice as would insure the destruction of my whole force before the victory could have been made available, and, if unsuccessful, would necessarily have resulted in the loss of the whole force. I therefore reluctantly determined to retire, and as it was evident preparations were making to cut off my retreat, and while troops were gathering around me I would find it difficult to get supplies, I determined to retire across the Potomac to this county before it became too late. I was led to this determination by the conviction that the loss of my force would have had such a depressing effect upon the country, and would so encourage the enemy as to amount to a very serious, if not fatal, disaster to our cause. My infantry force did not exceed 10,000, as Breckinridge's infantry (nominally much larger) really did not exceed 2,500 muskets. A considerable part of the cavalry has proved wholly insufficient. Siegel was at Maryland Heights, Hunter was making his way to get in my rear, and Couch was organizing a militia force in Pennsylvania. If, therefore, I had met a disaster I could not have got off, and if I had succeeded in the assault, yet my force would have been so crippled that I could not have continued their active operations so necessary in an expedition like mine.

All these considerations conduced to the determination to which I came, and accordingly, after threatening the city all day of the 12th, I retired after night, and have moved to this place in entire good order and without any loss whatever.

Taking into consideration the number of men engaged, the battle of the Monocacy was a most sanguinary affair and the losses sustained on both sides unusually great.

From Confederate Maj.-Gen. J. B. Gordon's report is extracted this partial account of the battle:

Having suffered severe loss in driving back two lines, either of which I believe equal in length to my command, and having discovered the third line longer than either of the others and protected by the cuts in the road, and in order to avoid the great loss it would require to drive the enemy from his position by a direct front attack, I dispatched two staff officers in succession to ask for a brigade to use upon the enemy's flank. Ascertaining, however, that a considerable length of time must elapse before these could reach me, I at once ordered Brigadier-General Terry to change front with his brigade to the right and attack the enemy's right. This movement promptly executed, with a simultaneous attack from the front, resulted in the dislodging of the line, and the complete rout of the enemy's forces. This battle, though short, was severe.

I desire in this connection to state a fact of which I was an eye-witness, and which, for its rare occurrence and the evidence it affords of the sanguinary character of this struggle, I consider worthy of official mention. One portion of the enemy's second line extended along a branch, from which he was driven, leaving many dead and wounded in the water and upon its banks. This position was in turn occupied by a portion of Evans' brigade in the attack on the enemy's third line. So profuse was the flow of blood from the killed and wounded of both these forces that it reddened the stream for more than 100 yards below. It has not been my fortune to witness on any battle-field a more commendable spirit and courage than was exhibited on this by both officers and men.

On the 28th day of July our troops were in the occupancy of Martinsburg. During this campaign (from June 23rd to August 3rd) the aggregate Union losses were 2843. An incomplete aggregate of those of the Confederates renders them as 1250.

## CHAPTER XLII

PETERSBURG, JUNE 12-19, 1864

**W**E will now return to the review of the operations of the main armies around Richmond. The Army of the Potomac, during the night of the 12th of June, silently moved out of their numerous lines on our front and disappeared under cover of the darkness. Being on the main line that night, engaged with a number of others in enlarging a heavy earthwork for artillery, the writer remembers distinctly how beautifully the moonlight illuminated the lines at that time.

We were under orders to keep on the alert, as there was expectation of an attack from the enemy. The men, like those in the building of the walls of Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah, had a mind to work, and as we are told of those ancients: "The builders every one had his sword girded on by his side and so builded." In like manner our men worked, each with his rifle close beside him. Quiet reigned throughout the night with us, and it was with no little surprise that the fact dawned upon us in the morning that the enemy "in darkness and silence had swept from our sight," and the moon by retiring had helped to "cover his flight." From right to left the whole front was vacated.

Our skirmishers were immediately hurried forward, but not finding the foe after an advance of two miles, they were ordered to return to their commands. Our army was then put in order of motion for the route taken by the Federals; General Hoke's division marching directly for Petersburg, as that was the point threatened.

General Grant's report ("War Records") speaks as follows of his withdrawal from in front of Cold Harbor:

Attaching great importance to the possession of Petersburg, I sent back to Bermuda Hundred and City Point General Smith's command by water, via White House, to reach there in advance of the Army of the Potomac. This was for the express purpose of securing Petersburg before the enemy, becoming aware of our

intention, could reënforce the place. The movement from Cold Harbor commenced after dark on the evening of the 12th; one division of cavalry, under General Wilson, and the Fifth Corps crossed the Chickahominy at Long Bridge, and moved out to White Oak Swamp, to cover the crossings of the other corps. The advance corps reached James River, at Wilcox's Landing and Charles City Court House, on the night of the 13th.

During three long years the Armies of the Potomac and Northern Virginia had been confronting each other. In that time they had fought more desperate battles than it probably ever before fell to the lot of two armies to fight, without materially changing the vantage ground of either. The Southern press and people, with more shrewdness than was displayed in the North, finding that they had failed to capture Washington and march on to New York, as they had boasted they would do, assumed that they only defended their capital and Southern territory. Hence, Antietam, Gettysburg, and other battles that had been fought were by them set down as failures on our part and victories for them. Their army believed this. It produced a morale which could only be overcome by desperate and hard fighting. The battles of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, North Anna, and Cold Harbor, bloody and terrible as they were on our side, were even more damaging to the enemy, and so crippled him as to make him wary ever after of taking the offensive. His losses in men were probably not so great, owing to the fact that we were, save in the Wilderness, almost invariably the attacking party, and when he did attack, it was in the open field.

While the two armies are engaged in their respective marches,—one for James River, at Wilcox's Landing, the other toward Malvern Hill, across country roads,—a bird's-eye view may be taken of the situation at Petersburg. This was an important point,—indeed, the most important in every way at the time of which we speak. It was under command of General Beauregard, who had his headquarters in front of Butler's army, which was then at Bermuda Hundred.

Brig.-Gen. Henry A. Wise was in command of the troops in front of Petersburg, consisting of his own brigade and the militia, numbering in all about 2200 men. The line in front of Butler was defended by a portion of Major-General Bushrod Johnson's division, 3200 men, or thereabout. This small force (one-third of which were subject to picket duty) was all that represented General Beauregard's army here, the remainder having been sent to reënforce General Lee.

The first attack on the city was made on the 9th of June by a part of General Gilmore's corps, of Butler's army, composed



principally of General Kautz's division of mounted infantry, numbering about 5000 men. The unique manner in which General Wise handled the raw troops and a few hospital convalescents and prisoners with their guards is learned in the following extract from his narrative of the affair, which says:

They pressed hard upon the left for three or four hours, and then suddenly attacked the militia on my extreme right with a detachment numbering 1,000, which were handsomely received by Archer; but they broke through his line, one-half of them taking the road into Petersburg, and the other the road leading to Blandford. Graham's battery, accidentally at the City Water Works, met the first; and a curious force drove back the latter. I had detailed all who could possibly do momentary duty out of the hospitals, calling them the "Patients," and from the jail and guard-houses all the prisoners, calling them "Penitents"; and the two companies of "Patients" and "Penitents" moved out on the Blandford road, while I advanced with three companies of the Forty-sixth from our left; and the enemy on that road, seeing the head of the column of "P P's" advancing in their front, and my three companies bearing on their right flank, they wheeled to the right-about at once and retired; and Graham's battery repulsed the other party advancing on the city. This was done with a loss of 13 killed and a few wounded, of the militia.

When, on the 15th, the Federals again assaulted us, the same troops were present, including a few dismounted cavalymen. The works for defense consisted of a number of redans, connected by earthworks. These were of considerable length, and required about 25,000 men to defend them properly. General Grant's earnest desire was the capture of Petersburg, and doubtless if his orders had been promptly and faithfully obeyed, Petersburg would then have fallen. On the 14th of June he telegraphed to Major-General Halleck:

Our forces will commence crossing the James to-day. The enemy show no signs of having brought troops to the south side of Richmond. I will have Petersburg secure, if possible, before they get there in much force.

In pursuance of the aforesaid intentions, General Grant visited General Butler at Bermuda Hundred on the evening of the 14th, at which time orders were issued for Smith's corps, reënforced by a negro division of infantry (commanded by one Hinks) and Kautz's division of cavalry, to cross the Appomattox

River on pontoon bridges, previously laid, and proceed against Petersburg. Early on the following morning (June 15th) this body of troops, numbering fully 20,000, moved forward in three columns, Kautz's cavalry protecting their left, to besiege a city defended by Confederate troops,—under command of General Wise,—whose numbers did not exceed 2200 men of all arms,—as has been stated before.

After advancing several miles, the soldiers of General Smith were met by Graham's light battery, supported by a small number of dismounted cavalymen in the rifle-pits,—the whole command being under Brigadier-General Dearing, a young soldier of gallant bearing and heroic spirit. For more than two hours these brave Confederates held the Federals in check; finally, being charged by additional multitudes, they were forced back upon the heavy works, with which that part of the city's front was girded. Every foot of the way was desperately contested; and when nearly half the day had slipped away the attacking columns had gained but slight advantage.

It was in the neighborhood of midday when Smith marched upon the intrenchments in front of batteries No. 6 and No. 7, which formed a portion of the eastern defenses of the City, where the brigade of Brigadier-General Wise was posted. Here the hot shot from the muskets steadily handled by Wise's men, who stood unflinching, repulsed assault after assault, in which repulses they were greatly assisted by the ready action of the light batteries. The result of this gallant defense was evident in the great discomfiture of the assailants, which caused a halt in the exercises,—General Smith deeming it prudent to inspect more closely the condition of his front. At the conclusion of the reconnoissance, during the early twilight he again moved his forces forward in line, and rushed with such impetuosity upon the Confederates that his men succeeded in carrying the entire line of redans No. 5 to No. 9.

This crowning victory to his arms was glory sufficient for one day's work, so Smith halted, re-formed his columns, and as the head of the Second Corps had just arrived upon the field, he relieved his own men with those of Hancock, and deferred until daylight the continuance of his operations. This delay may be truly regarded as a prime cause of his failure to capture Petersburg. Had Smith pushed onward then and there, with the sturdy men of the Second Corps at his back, Petersburg would have proved an easy prey.

The following quotations from "The Recollections of a Private Soldier in the Army of the Potomac" assign, from a Federal standpoint, the reason why the capture was not made.

We cooked and ate, and fooled the time away. This, when every intelligent enlisted man in the Second Corps knew that not many miles away the columns of the Army of Northern Virginia were marching furiously to save Petersburg and Richmond and the Confederacy. We could almost see those veteran troops,—lean, squalid, hungry and battle-torn,—with set jaws and anxious-looking eyes, striding rapidly through the dust, pouring over bridges, crowding through the streets of villages, and ever hurrying on to face us. And we knew that, once they got behind the earthworks in our front, we could not drive them out.

All of us were greatly depressed. It grew lighter, and there before us, fully revealed, was a long, high line of intrenchments, with heavy redoubts, where cannon were massed at the angles, silent, grim. No wasteful fire shot forth from that line. Now and then a man rose up out of the Confederate rifle-pits, and a rifle-ball flew close above us, no longer singing high in the air. Sadly we looked at one another. We knew that the men who had fought us in the Wilderness, at Spottsylvania, North Anna, and Cold Harbor were in the works sleeping, gaining strength to repulse our assaults, while their pickets watched for them.

About 70,000 of the good men we had crossed the Rapidan with lay dead behind us, or were in hospitals, or languished in Confederate military prisons.

After this halt the Federals were seemingly satisfied with the possession of the main line of our works. Meanwhile General Hoke, with his division, and General Beauregard had arrived upon the field, and different arrangements for the next day's assaults were made. During the night a new line was laid out a short distance in the rear of the old one. About this time the three brigades of Major-General Johnson's division were ordered forward from the south side.

On the following morning (June 16) the situation stood thus: In front of our General's little band of about 7000 men was arrayed a Federal force of 40,000 men, or a number approximating that. By 10 o'clock General Johnson's division had arrived as a support to the Confederates and 12 o'clock General Burnside's corps (the Ninth) had been added to the Federals. Most fortunately for our side, the assaults in the earlier stage of the contest were rather feebly made,—indeed, the major portion

of the day had passed before any really serious fighting took place.

It was nearly, if not quite, six o'clock in the evening that the desperate work of the day began. Warren's corps had by this time arrived upon the field, thus increasing the enemy's force to about 65,000 men,—the Confederates numbering barely 10,000. In numerical strength this certainly shows great disparity, and, to some grades of soldiers, might have been disheartening; but our commander and his faithful followers remained undismayed at their posts. The assailants bore down upon our weak lines with manly intrepidity, and for upwards of three hours the battle raged desperately along our entire front. Rapidly as the assaulting parties were beaten back fresh troops supplied their places, and thus the conflict was continued until night had well-nigh closed in. At this time it was found that a portion of the enemy's Second Corps had effected a serious lodgment on a part of our line, from which several unsuccessful attempts were made during the night to dislodge them. Thus ended the second day's effort to capture Petersburg. The great fighter, Gen. W. S. Hancock, was in immediate command of the assaulting columns on this day, and the following quotation is from his official report.

During the forenoon of the 16th I was instructed by Lieutenant-General Grant, in the absence of General Meade and himself, to take command of all the troops in front of Petersburg, and to push forward a reconnoitering force in my front, for the purpose of discovering the most favorable point at which to make an attack. I was ordered to be prepared to commence the attack at 6 p. m. In the meantime General Burnside had been directed to mass his corps upon my left, in readiness to assist in an assault upon the enemy when it should be determined, or to aid me in the event of my being assailed. The reconnaissance ordered by General Grant was made by General Birney on the left of the Prince George Road, and in front of the hill on which the Hare house stood, which was then held by the enemy. It was decided by Major-General Meade, who had now arrived upon the field, that the attack should be made at that point. Very sharp skirmishing, accompanied by artillery fire, continued along my front until 6 p. m., when, in accordance with instructions from the major-general commanding, I directed Generals Birney, Barlow, and Gibbon to advance and assault the enemy in front and to the left of the Hare house. My troops were supported by two brigades of the Ninth Corps and by two of the Eighteenth Corps. The advance was spirited and forcible, and resulted, after a fierce conflict, in which our troops suffered heav-

ily, in driving the enemy back some distance along our whole line. The severe fighting ceased at dark, although the enemy made several vigorous attempts during the night to retake the ground which he had lost; in this, however, he was foiled, as our troops had intrenched themselves at dark and repelled all efforts to dislodge them.

It was not daybreak on the third day (June 17) when our enemies were astir, and soon thereafter came forward in a spirited assault upon a portion of our front, driving our men from their position, capturing a redoubt, four guns, and several hundred prisoners. This was accomplished by a portion of General Burnside's corps. The divisions of Birney and Gibbon, of the Second Corps, on the right of the Federal lines, made an attack on our front, and forcing our men from the hill upon which the Hare house stood, took a position from which we several times during the day endeavored to oust them, but without success. Beautifully pictured in the able address of Capt. W. Gordon McCabe delivered November 1, 1876, before the Association of the Army of Northern Virginia, will be found the occurrences that transpired later in the day.

Then along the whole front occurred a series of assaults and counter-charges creditable to the courage and enterprise of both sides, yet so confused that an attempted narrative would necessarily share that confusion. Suffice it to say, that at dusk the Confederate lines were pierced, and, the troops crowding together in disorder, irreparable disaster seemed imminent, when suddenly in the dim twilight a dark column was descried mounting swiftly from the ravine in rear, and Gracie's gallant Alabamians, springing along the crest with fierce cries, leaped over the works, captured over fifteen hundred prisoners, and drove the enemy pell-mell from the disputed point. Then the combat broke out afresh; for the enemy, with reason, felt that chance alone had foiled them of decisive success, and despite the darkness, the fight raged with unabated fury until past midnight.<sup>1</sup>

During the afternoon and night of the 17th the assaults of the enemy were maintained with such determination that our little band of braves so long and solely pressed, their lines growing more and more attenuated, were cautiously withdrawn by our commander to a location that had been previously staked out

<sup>1</sup> "Gracie's brigade was promptly put into the gap in the lines, and drove back the Federals, capturing from 1500 to 2500 prisoners."—*Beauregard's Ms. Report*, 16.

in the rear. When daylight came on the following morning our troops were in position, and so strongly situated that the succeeding efforts to dislodge them were unavailing.

General Grant's orders had been issued for an assault, along our whole front at 4 o'clock on the morning of the 18th, and, in accordance therewith, his skirmishers were advanced; and not until then did they become aware of the abandonment of our works. A halt necessarily followed, and the plan of operations had to be rearranged before the renewal of the enemy's attacks. Our lines meanwhile had been materially strengthened, and our men reënforced about 7:30 a. m. by the arrival of Kershaw's division, and about two hours later, by Field's division,—both of Longstreet's corps. At 11:30 General Lee was upon the field, and was closely followed by the other troops.

It was a little while after the middle of the day that our enemies recommenced their assaults, which were spasmodically continued. From right to left, from left to right, the lines of blue burst forth swiftly and furiously at intervals, and gallantly they breasted the storm of shot and shell for a while; but the raking fire of our light guns, and the deadly thud of the musket balls broke their ranks and hurled them back in great confusion. At one point thirteen brigades essayed to gain our crest, but the fire proved too hot for them,—so much so, indeed, that they broke and fled from the field, leaving their dead and wounded. As their assaults were all repulsed by nightfall, our brave defenders were the victors in the fourth day's battles.

While this dreadful contest was in progress, division after division, brigade after brigade, regiment after regiment, battery after battery, of the tattered, foot-sore, hungry men of Lee's army, poured through the streets of Petersburg, and were occupying their places in the lines at the front; so that when the shadows of twilight were absorbed in the darkness of night the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia again stood face to face.

When the departure of the Federal army from in front of Cold Harbor, during the night of the 12th of June,—had been positively ascertained, and the route of march designated, our forces moved in accordance therewith, and marching by the right, reached the neighborhood of Riddell's Shop, beyond the White Oak Swamp, at which point our ever-faithful cavalry held the enemy in check. General Wilcox's division relieved the cavalry and in a short while thereafter the enemy was pressed back some

distance. During the few succeeding days the main army remained in this locality, with its right extending towards Malvern Hill.

In connection with the stubborn defense of Petersburg by General Beauregard, with his numerically inferior force,—as feebly portrayed in the foregoing pages,—there is a peculiar and perhaps unique condition of affairs. It must be remembered that three distinct and separate bodies of men moved upon our side on this great military chessboard to be presented thus: The Confederate States' Armies, under command of Gen. Braxton Bragg, Richmond, Va.; Department of North Carolina and Southern Virginia, under command of Gen. G. T. Beauregard, Petersburg, Va.; and the Army of Northern Virginia, under command of Gen. Robert E. Lee, whose headquarters were in the field. General Beauregard reported to General Bragg, and General Lee to the Secretary of War, or to President Davis. The great question involved in the state of affairs thus mentioned, not infrequently propounded, is: "Why was Petersburg left without ample troops to defend it properly?" The following correspondence is given in regular order, without comment.

SWIFT CREEK,  
June 13, 1864.

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG:

General Dearing reports:

"I learn from scouts seven transports with troops passed up James River yesterday for Bermuda Hundred or City Point, to operate against Petersburg; most likely latter."

G. T. BEAUREGARD, General.

DUNLOP'S HOUSE,  
June 13, 1864—5:30 P. M.

GENERAL BRAGG:

Signal officer, Acting Master Mines, reports from Rock Wharf a large body of men at Newport News and fifty transports are lying in Hampton Roads. It is rumored Grant intends advancing from South side.

G. T. BEAUREGARD, General.

SWIFT CREEK,  
June 14, 1864—7:15 A. M.

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG:

Movement of Grant across Chickahominy and increase of Butler's force render my position critical. With my present force I

cannot answer for consequences. Cannot my troops sent to General Lee be returned at once? Please submit my letter of 9th instant to President.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

SWIFT CREEK,  
June 14, 1864—10 A. M.

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG:

Following dispatch has just been sent to General Lee: "Petersburg cannot be reënforced from my small force in lines of Bermuda Hundred Neck without abandoning entirely that position. Reënforcements should first reach there before detaching these troops, which, possessing local knowledge, should be preferably retained where they are. Should you not have a pontoon bridge below Chaffin's Bluff?"

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

SWIFT CREEK,  
June 14, 1864—8:10 P. M.

GENERAL R. E. LEE,

ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA:

A deserter from the enemy reports that Butler has been reënforced by the Eighteenth and a part of the Tenth Army Corps.

G. T. BEAUREGARD, General.

RICHMOND,  
June 14, 1864—9:10 P. M.

GENERAL BEAUREGARD:

General Lee reports Grant has abandoned his depot on the York and moved to James River, he supposes about McClellan's old base at Harrison's Landing. Lee is on a line from Malvern Hill to White Oak Swamp. He has sent Hoke's division to Drury's Bluff, with a view to reënforce you in case Petersburg is threatened.

BRAXTON BRAGG, General.

HDQRS. DEPT. OF N. CAROLINA AND SOUTHERN VA.,  
June 18, 1864.

MAJ.-GEN. R. H. HOKE, DREWRY'S BLUFF.

GENERAL: The commanding general directs that you move at once as rapidly as possible, with your division, to Petersburg, leaving one brigade at Walthall.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

JNO. M. OTEY,  
Assistant Adjutant-General.



June 14, 1864.

GENERAL BRAGG, RICHMOND:

My troops are on the march. Will camp half a mile from Drury's Bluff, on the river road.

R. F. HOKE,  
Major-General.

DUNLOP'S HOUSE,  
June 15, 1864—7 A. M.

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG:

Return of Butler's forces sent to Grant, and arrival of latter at Harrison's Landing renders my position more critical than ever; if not reënforced immediately enemy could force my lines at Bermuda Hundred Neck, capture Battery Dantzler, now nearly ready, or take Petersburg, before any troops from Lee's army or Drury's Bluff could arrive in time. Can anything be done in this matter?

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

SWIFT CREEK,  
June 15, 1864—9 A. M.

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG:

General Dearing reports at 7:35 a. m.: "Enemy is still in our front in force; reported advancing in heavy force on Broadway road. A prisoner says some of Burnside's troops are there. If so, it is very important."

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

SWIFT CREEK,  
June 15, 1864—9:30 A. M.

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG:

Signal officer near Fort Clifton reports musketry and artillery heard on south side Appomattox. I have ordered Hoke's division from Drury's Bluff to Petersburg, leaving one brigade at Port Walthall Junction until it can be relieved by another. Please order Ransom's, of Johnson's division, to do so.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

SWIFT CREEK,  
June 15, 1864—9:30 A. M.

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG:

General Dearing, from south side of Appomattox, reports enemy have attacked my outposts in force. Prisoners state there are four regiments of infantry and four of cavalry close behind. They say it is an "on to Petersburg," and more force behind.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

SWIFT CREEK,  
June 15, 1864—11:45 A. M.

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG:

General Wise reports General Dearing's cavalry driven back on Petersburg, with loss of one piece of artillery. Enemy reported three brigades of infantry and considerable force cavalry, apparently moving toward Baxter and Jerusalem plank roads. He calls for reënforcements on his whole line. We must now elect between lines of Bermuda Neck and Petersburg. We cannot hold both. Please answer at once.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

SWIFT CREEK, VA.,  
June 15, 1864—I P. M.

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG,  
RICHMOND, VA.:

Hoke's division is ordered to Petersburg; hope it will get there in time. I will hold lines of Bermuda Hundred Neck as long as practicable, but I may have to reënforce Hoke with Johnson's division, when lines would be lost. I advise sending forthwith another strong division to intersection of turnpike and railroad, near Port Walthall Junction.

G. T. BEAUREGARD, General.

PETERSBURG, VA.,  
June 15, 1864—9:11 P. M.

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG,  
RICHMOND, VA.:

Reënforcements not having arrived in time, enemy penetrated lines from Battery 5 to 8 inclusive. Will endeavor to retake them by daybreak. I shall order Johnson to this point with all his forces. General Lee must look to the defenses of Drury's Bluff and the lines across Bermuda Neck, if possible.

(Copy to General Lee.)

G. T. BEAUREGARD, General.

PETERSBURG, VA.,  
June 15, 1864, 11:15 P. M.

GENERAL R. E. LEE,

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA:

I have abandoned my lines on Bermuda Neck to concentrate all my forces here; skirmishers and pickets will leave there at daylight. Cannot these lines be occupied by your troops? The safety of our communication requires it. Five thousand or 6,000 men may do.

G. T. BEAUREGARD, General.

June 15, 1864, 11:30 o'clock.

GENERAL BRAGG,  
RICHMOND.

I have just received orders to cross the river and report to General Beauregard. My troops are on the march.

R. F. HOKE, Major-General.

RICHMOND, VA.,  
June 15, 1864.

COMMANDING OFFICER,  
CHAFFIN'S BLUFF.

Send immediately Ransom's brigade to report to General Beauregard. No time must be lost. Answer.

S. COOPER,  
Adjutant and Inspector General.

BOTTOM'S BRIDGE,  
June 16, 1864.

GEN'RAL BRAGG:

General Lee is moving his headquarters to vicinity of Chaffin's Bluff. Communications will reach him quickest if sent that way. Please inform War Office.

W. H. TAYLOR,  
Assistant Adjutant-General.

GENERAL B. BRAGG,  
RICHMOND.

Just arrived at this point with Pickett's division. Have informed General Beauregard. Direct to me here.

R. E. LEE.

DRURY'S BLUFF, June 16, 1864, 9:40 A. M.

GENERAL BEAUREGARD,  
PETERSBURG.

Please inform me of condition of affairs. Pickett's division is in vicinity of your lines front of Bermuda.

R. E. LEE.

DRURY'S BLUFF, June 16, 1864, 10:30 A. M.

GENERAL BEAUREGARD,  
PETERSBURG.

Your dispatch of 9:45 received. It is the first that has come to hand. I do not know the position of Grant's army, and cannot strip north bank of James River. Have you not force sufficient?

R. E. LEE.

DRURY'S BLUFF, June 16, 1864, 3 P. M.

GENERAL BEAUREGARD.

GENERAL: Dispatch of 12:45 received. Pickett had passed this place at date of my first dispatch. I did not receive your notice of intended evacuation till 2 a. m. Troops were then at Malvern Hill, four miles from me. Am glad to hear you can hold Petersburg. Hope you will drive the enemy. Have not heard of Grant's crossing James River.

R. E. LEE.

CLAY'S HOUSE, June 17, 1864, 12 M.

GENERAL BEAUREGARD, PETERSBURG, VA.

Telegram of 9 a. m. received. Until I can get more definite information of Grant's movements I do not think it prudent to draw more troops to this side of the river.

R. E. LEE.

CLAY'S HOUSE, June 17, 1864, 3:30 P. M.

MAJ.-GEN. W. H. F. LEE,

MALVERN HILL, VIA MEADOW STATION.

Push after enemy and endeavor to ascertain what has become of Grant's army. Inform General Hill.

R. E. LEE.

June 16, 1864, 4 P. M.

GENERAL BEAUREGARD,

PETERSBURG.

The transports you mention have probably returned Butler's troops. Has Grant been seen crossing James River?

R. E. LEE.

CLAY'S HOUSE, June 17, 1864, 4:30 P. M.

LIEUT.-GEN. A. P. HILL,

RIDDELL'S SHOP, VIA MEADOW STATION.

General Beauregard reports large numbers of Grant's troops crossed James River above Fort Powhatan yesterday. If you have nothing contradictory of this, move to Chaffin's Bluff.

R. E. LEE.

CLAY'S HOUSE, June 17, 1864.

LIEUT.-GEN. A. P. HILL,

RIDDELL'S SHOP, VIA MEADOW STATION.

As soon as you can ascertain that Grant has crossed James River move up to Chaffin's Bluff and be prepared to cross.

R. E. LEE.

CLAY'S HOUSE, June 17, 1864, 4:30 P. M.

GENERAL G. T. BEAUREGARD,  
PETERSBURG, VA.

Have no information of Grant's crossing James River, but upon your report have ordered troops up to Chaffin's Bluff.

R. E. LEE.

PETERSBURG, June 16, 1864, 9:45 P. M.

GENERAL BRAGG.

Enemy made two attacks on our lines this afternoon. They were repulsed with loss. We captured about 400 prisoners, including 11 commissioned officers. They belong to First Brigade of Hancock's corps. All quiet at this moment.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

PETERSBURG, June 17 [18], 1864, 12:30 P. M. [A. M.]

GENERAL BRAGG.

Enemy, in large force, reported to be three corps,—Second, Ninth, and Eighteenth,—attacked heavily our lines at 6:30 p. m. Affair lasted until 11:30 p. m. Enemy was finally repulsed at all points. Some 300 prisoners and two stands of colors were taken. Losses not yet ascertained.

G. T. BEAUREGARD,  
General.

(Same to General Lee).

PETERSBURG, June 17 [18], 1864, 12:40 P. M. [A. M.]

GENERAL BRAXTON BRAGG.

All quiet at present. I expect renewal of attack in morning. My troops are becoming much exhausted. Without immediate and strong reinforcements, results may be unfavorable. Prisoners report Grant on the field with his whole army.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

(Same to General Lee.)

Up to the 18th this great contest had been conducted and sustained without the assistance of a single man from the Army of Northern Virginia. Beauregard's noble defense of Petersburg was as gallant an achievement as has ever been executed by any military genius in this or any other era.

On the morning of the 16th of June, as the head of General Pickett's division, of Longstreet's corps,—now under command of General Anderson,—was marching leisurely along the road between Drury's Bluff and Port Walthall Junction (some 5 miles from Petersburg), it was fired upon by the enemy,—who had possessed himself of our lines, a short time after General

Beauregard had been obliged to uncover them in the defense of Petersburg. Our column was halted and skirmishers thrown out to the front, after which the troops formed in line of battle and advanced with a rush at the enemy.

The battle was quick and sharp; the enemy being driven first from the rifle-pits, then from our old works, thus enabling us to reestablish our lines on that portion of the field. This brilliant affair drew forth from General Lee (who was at Drury's Bluff, and, more than probably, an eye witness to the promptness of the men) quite a humorous note, addressed to General Anderson, which exceedingly amused and gladdened the hearts of all the boys when it was read to them several days thereafter. The communication runs thus:

CLAY'S HOUSE, 5½ P. M., 17 June, 1864.

LIEUT.-GEN. R. H. ANDERSON,

Commanding Longstreet's Corps.

GENERAL:

I take great pleasure in presenting to you my congratulations upon the conduct of the men of your corps. I believe that they will carry anything they are put against. We tried very hard to stop Pickett's men from capturing the breastworks of the enemy, but couldn't do it. I hope his loss has been small.

I am, with respect, your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, General.

OFFICIAL: G. M. SORRELL, LIEUT.-COL., A. A. General.

FOR MAJOR-GEN. G. E. PICKETT,

Commanding division.

Before midnight of the 16th other portions of these lines in front of Butler's army, were retaken; these included the works at the Howlett's House.

Preparatory to evacuating this particular part of our lines General Beauregard had buried the heavy guns, and upon our regaining possession of those works, the guns were unearthed, put in position, and made ready to pay tribute to any of the enemy's gunboats or steamers that dared approach within their range.

General Field's division occupied the right, extending to Fort Clifton, on the banks of the Appomattox. At 4 o'clock on the afternoon of the 17th, that portion of the lines held by our antagonists was assaulted with great vim, resulting in their being driven out and the entire line reestablished in the occupancy of our troops. From the 18th of June, 1864, to the 4th of March,

1865, upon General Pickett's division devolved the care of the cork that so tightly bottled up Butler's forces at Bermuda Hundred Neck; and the only time allowed him for a breathing spell was when Beauregard drew that cork and marched to the defense of Petersburg.

The aggregate of the armies now confronting each other on the lines from in front of Richmond to the right of Petersburg as appears in the abstracts for June, 1864 ("War Records"), is as follows:

Army of the Potomac, present for duty.	86,610
Army of the James, present for duty.	<u>33,487</u>
Aggregate Union forces, present for duty	. 120,097
Army of Northern Virginia, present for duty	38,971
General Beauregard's Army, present for duty	<u>13,251</u>
Aggregate Confederate forces, present for duty	52,222

## CHAPTER XLIII

MAHONE'S CHARGE. THE WILSON RAID. SUNDRY MATTERS.  
JUNE 19—JULY 26, 1864

SUNDAY, the 19th day of June, was passed in comparative quietude by the armies who confronted each other at Petersburg and its vicinity. True, the picket lines on both sides were kept constantly busy, the fire was continuous, and pick and shovel were utilized with activity to strengthen and enlarge the earthworks that had risen with such rapidity in front of the opposing forces. Men by thousands were wielding the implements most effective for this purpose.

General Grant had not entirely relinquished his noted "movement to the left." By dearly bought experience, in which his losses had exceeded 15,000 men, he ascertained that Petersburg could not be taken by direct assault; so he resumed his former project of turning the Confederate right. For the purpose of seizing the Weldon Railroad (connecting Petersburg and Weldon, N. C.), the Second and Sixth Corps moved out on the 21st from our front, and passing to the Federal left, they took their position; the Second on the left of the Fifth (Warren's corps), west of the Jerusalem Plank Road, and the sixth in rear of the Second with its lines overlapping the left of that corps. On the following morning Barlow's division, which was the left of the Second, was ordered to swing forward, to keep up the connection with Mott's division, on its right, until, according to order, "Your whole line is in close proximity to that of the enemy. You will not be dependent on any movement of the Sixth Corps."

The execution of this movement soon found the left of Barlow "in the air," and the open space between the Second and Sixth Corps afforded General Lee the opportunity which he was usually on the alert to utilize, and he lost no time in showing his appreciation of the advantage. Summoning General Mahone, he dispatched him, with three brigades of his division,—those of Saunders, Wright, and the "Stonewall" Brigade, under Colonel Weisiger,—to strike the enemy in flank. Mahone was also ac-



accompanied by Dement's battery, under Lieutenant Gale. Passing his men, out of sight of the enemy, along a ravine, Mahone attained a point on their flank, and there, in the solitude of the forest, he formed his lines, with Saunders and Wright in front and Weisiger supporting the right, while Dement's battery moved in the opening on the left. Then, while the Federal columns were pivoting on their right division, the shrill yells of Mahone's men rang out in greeting from the dense pines to their left and rear, and speedily our veterans swept forward,—mid flashes of light and columns of smoke,—directly down upon the ranks of Barlow. Hurling him aside, and doubling up the division of Mott, they forced their way aslant his front. Storming and seizing the entrenchments of Gibbon, they captured his guns and drove him to the rear.

The Federal loss was quite severe: 1700 men, 4 pieces of artillery, 8 stands of colors, and a large number of small arms being captured.

The following is from General Lee's dispatch to the Secretary of War, under date of June 22, 1864:

Yesterday a movement of infantry, cavalry, and artillery was made toward the right of our forces at Petersburg, in the direction of the Weldon Railroad. The enemy was driven back, and his infantry is reported to have halted. His cavalry have continued to advance upon the road by a route farther removed from our position. The enemy's infantry was attacked this afternoon on the west side of the Jerusalem Plank Road and driven from his first line of works to his second on that road by General Mahone, with a part of his division.

We quote from Major-General Birney's report as follows:

The advance of the enemy, in whatever force made, was preceded by a strong skirmish-line, which opened a sharp fire on the left and rear of our troops, advancing in line and directly upon the troops moving to the front by the flank. The unexpectedness of the fire and the trying character of the country might have excused a momentary confusion, but the troops on this part of the line seem to have been seized with panic, and to have only attempted to regain the breastworks, in which they rallied readily enough and showed a disposition to defend them. The breaking of the First Division communicated the panic in a less degree to the Third Division, which fell back rapidly and in some confusion, the enemy still pressing sharply along the advanced line taken by the corps, and striking everything on it by the flank. There was no proper effort made by

the immediate commanders to effect a change of front and meet the fire of the enemy. The impulse seems to have been, both with officers and men, to regain their rifle-pits. As the rapid advance of the enemy reached the right of General Mott and the left of General Gibbon it seems to have been combined with a movement of other troops directly in front, whether preconcerted or excited by it, it is impossible to say.

There was no reason, either in the force engaged or in the character of the ground,—equally unfavorable to them as to us,—why the enemy's attack should not have been promptly repelled. I attribute the failure to the extraordinary losses among the commanding staff and other officers in this command, to the large proportion of new troops assigned to this corps to replace veterans, to the fact that the Sixth Corps did not advance simultaneously, and that, in consequence, my line was taken in flank, and at points even in reverse, creating a panic, and compelling a withdrawal to my line of that morning, with considerable loss.

Maj.-Gen. John Gibbon says :

About 3 p. m. on the 22nd the enemy made an attack on Barlow and Mott. The troops on my left gave way without much firing, and the first thing my Second Brigade knew of the approach of the enemy in force they received a fire from the rear. The brigade gave way in confusion. The enemy overran the left of my line, capturing McKnight's battery and turning the guns upon us. The left of the First Brigade shared in the confusion. It was rallied, and a portion of the Fourth Brigade sent to General Pierce to retake the line and the battery. General Pierce was so slow in making his dispositions that the enemy was enabled to gain a firm footing, and Colonel Blaisdell, who was ordered to supersede him, found them too strong to be driven out. On advancing the next morning to retake the position, it was found that the enemy had vacated it, and retired within his main works.

#### THE WILSON RAID

The Union cavalry under command of General Wilson, composed of his own division and that of General Kautz, with 12 guns, and numbering about 6000 men, had, in advance of the infantry movements above described, pursued an outward course in the direction of the Weldon Railroad, striking it at Keane's Station. This was on the 22nd. They had succeeded in destroying several miles of the track when their rear brigade was attacked by a small division of our cavalry under Gen. Wm. H.

F Lee, who had followed their march and kept close to their rear, striking whenever opportunity presented itself.

At 2 p. m. the advance of Kautz's command struck the South Side Road, at the Sixteen Mile Turnout. Until the rear of the Federals reached the South Side Road, they were continually harassed by General Lee's men, who hung persistently close upon them. While they were busy in the destruction of the road at Blacks and Whites, General Lee brought his little force to bear upon them, with unabated spirit, the result being that their column was cut in two, and they were so effectually deprived of the route chosen for their march that all attempts made by Wilson to regain it during the day proved futile. The contest was continued through the next day (June 23) until dark, and at dawn of the following morning the Federals withdrew, leaving their dead and wounded to be cared for by our men.

Wilson united his force with that of Kautz and the column hurried on to the Staunton River bridge; but the militia on duty at that point foiled them in their efforts to capture it, and, as the afternoon drew on, Lee's cavalry again renewing their assaults, they were driven until dark, their dead being left on the field. Turning their faces toward the Petersburg lines, they were hoping to regain them without much trouble, but the tenacity with which Lee's men continued at their heels and the mutterings of the storm brewing in their front were both bewildering and perplexing to them.

Quoting from the address of Captain McCabe, the finale is presented thus:

At every step, indeed, the peril thickened, for Hampton, who had crossed the James, now came to W. H. F. Lee's help with a strong body of horse, and attacking the enemy on Tuesday (June 28th), at Sappony Church, drove him until dark, harassed him the livelong night, turned his left in the morning, and sent him helter-skelter before his horsemen.

Wilson, fairly bewildered, sought to reach Ream's Station, which he believed to be still in possession of the Federals,—a determination destined to be attended with irreparable disaster to him; for General Lee had dispatched thither two brigades of infantry (Fennegan's and Saunders') under Mahone, and two light batteries (Bromder's and "the Purcell"), under Pegram, followed by Fitz. Lee, who had just roughly handled Gregg at Nance's Shop, and who now came down at a sharp trot to take part in the tumult. Wilson, reaching his objective, descried ominous clouds of dust

rising on the roads by which he had hoped to win safety, but offering, in desperation, a seemingly bold front, prepared for battle.

Informed by a negro, whose knowledge of the country notably expanded at sight of a six-shooter, that there was a "blind-road" leading in rear of Wilson's left, Fitz. Lee at once pushed forward with his dusky guide, and having assured himself by personal reconnoissance of the truth of the information, quickly made his dispositions. Lomax's horsemen, dismounted, were formed across the road, with Wickham's mounted brigade in reserve, the latter being instructed to charge so soon as Lomax had shaken the enemy. In a twinkling, as it seemed, the rattling fire of the carbines told that Lomax was hotly engaged, and on the instant the movement in front began,—the infantry, under Mahone, advancing swiftly across the open field, pouring in a biting volley, Pegram firing rapidly for a few moments, then limbering up and going forward at a gallop, to come into battery on a line with the infantry, while Fitz. Lee, the Federals rapidly giving ground before his dismounted troopers, called up his mounted squadrons and went in, with his rough stroke, at a thundering pace on the enemy's left and rear.

For a brief space the confused combat, ever receding, went on,—fierce shouts of triumph mingling with the dismal cries of stricken men, ringing pistol shots, the clattering fire of cavalry carbines, the dull roar of the guns,—then, on a sudden, the headlong pace of "Runaway Down." The woods were now all ablaze, for Wilson had fired his trains, and the infantry and artillery, pressing forward through the stifling heat and smoke, were greeted by a sight not soon to be forgotten: a score or two of Federal troopers, in gaily-trimmed jackets, lying dead upon their faces in the dusty road; pistols, carbines, sabres, scattered over the ground in wildest profusion; a long line of ambulances filled with wounded men, who gave vent to piteous moans; a confused mass of guns, caissons, supply and ordnance wagons; dead horses, stolen vehicles of all kinds,—from the wonderful "one-horse shay" to the old family carriage, all of them crammed with books, bacon, looking-glasses, and ladies' wearing apparel of every description, from garments of mysterious pattern to dresses of the finest stuff; while cowering along the roadside were nearly a thousand fugitive negroes, the poor creatures almost pallid with fright, the pickaninnies roaring lustily, several of the women in the pangs of childbirth. Nor was this pillage on the part of the men to be wondered at, for in the headquarter-wagon of the commanding general was found much plunder,—among other articles of stolen silver, a communion-service inscribed "*Saint John's Church, Cumberland Parish, Lunenburg.*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A list of stolen silver may be found in the *Richmond Examiner*, July 5th, 1864. In the same paper (June 27) may be seen an official list, sent by

Fitz. Lee, in hot pursuit, captured within a few miles two more light guns, and ordered the Federal artillerymen to turn them upon their flying comrades. Whether through pride in their well-known proficiency in this arm of the service, or because they were conscious of the exclusive, if not gratifying attention, of sundry lean-faced Confederates of determined aspect, I do not know, but certain is it that the cannoniers soon warmed to their work, and the gunners, stepping quickly aside to avoid the smoke, marked the successful shots, and discovered their satisfaction by cries of approbation to their men.

Thus Wilson, who but eight days before had crossed this road in all the pomp of war, with gaily-flaunting pennons and burnished trappings flashing in the sun, while the earth trembled beneath the thunder of his trampling squadrons, now slunk across the Nottaway ("horses and men in a pitiable condition," says the Union historian), having abandoned to the Confederates his trains, a great quantity of valuable ordnance stores and small arms, the captured negroes, one thousand prisoners, *besides his killed and wounded*, and thirteen pieces of artillery.

#### SUNDRIES

On the 23rd came General Grant's third attempt to obtain control of the Weldon Railroad with his infantry by pushing forward the Sixth Corps (Wright's). General Mahone was at hand and after a sharp conflict drove him from the field with heavy loss. Eight hundred prisoners, 28 of whom were commissioned officers, fell into our hands.

Both flanks of the Federals were felt by our forces on the morning of the 24th, but losses were light. General Hoke, on our left, was successful in entering the enemy's lines, but having no support, was obliged to retire, losing 306—officers and men—of the advance line.

On or about the 26th of June the enemy proceeded, without opposition, to lay a pontoon bridge across the James River, from Jones' Neck to Deep Bottom. They took position, fortifying heavily, at the head of the bridge, on the north side of the stream. This position, supported by the gunboats, became the base from which all the movements on the north side were made, thus permitting, as it did, the enemy to threaten Richmond at pleasure,

General Lomax, of the silver found in Custer's headquarters-wagon, captured at Trevilian's. The silver was sent to W. H. McFarland, Esq., of Richmond, to be identified and reclaimed by its owners.

and occasioning the Confederate troops many rapid, toilsome marches.

These days of comparative quiet to the men in the trenches in front of Petersburg and along the lines facing Bermuda Hundred afforded opportunity to the Federal official dignitaries of high caliber for the concoction of new plans for the destruction of our army and the capture of Richmond. General Grant generated two plans for the accomplishment of this purpose. Of these the first was to force his way between Petersburg and Richmond, "either by the north bank of Swift Creek, or between Swift Creek and the Appomattox." This, because of the nature of the ground and the strength of the defences erected by us, was not practicable, as it necessitated his having to pass through a portion of the neck of the bottle in which Butler was so tightly corked up at Bermuda Hundred. The other project was to take "the whole of the army of the Potomac, with ten days' rations (practically Maj.-Gen. G. K. Warren's suggestion), and move around the enemy's right until the Appomattox is reached."

In acknowledging the consideration of his plan by General Meade, General Warren says:

If General Lee moves out on our rear, we can face about at once and give him battle. All our efforts are attended with such great difficulties that I believe no one can regard any future operations, viewed in the light of our experience in this campaign, with anything but the deepest anxiety and solicitude. And I venture to say that officers and men are getting very weary and nervous.

With our unparalleled losses and exhausting efforts, we can scarcely say we are much nearer destroying Lee's army than when we were on the Rapidan. Before that is consummated we must make some decisive movement in which, throwing all our weight in the battle, we are willing to run the risk of losing all by a failure,—fight the Wilderness battle over again. I more fear Lee attacking our weakened lines than anything else.

The difficulties in effecting the Federal generals' second plan may be summed up in the fact that our foemen's situation was such that any attempt to enforce this scheme in the manner prescribed would have been playing into General Lee's hand. A fight in the open, with the privilege of choosing the points of attack, was what our commander was always ready for; the partial demoralization of the Union forces,—as is plainly demonstrated in the reports and dispatches of their officers written at that time,—shows conclusively, that notwithstanding the numeri-

cal odds against the Confederates, they would in all probability have come out without disaster from the combat.

The losses of the Army of the Potomac, from May 5 to June 30, 1864, as tabulated in the "War Records,"—an incomplete report at that,—are as follows:

Wilderness, May 5-12.	..	.29,410
Spottsylvania, May 12-21		10,381
North Anna, May 21-31		1,607
Cold Harbor, June 1-10.	..	.13,153
Petersburg, June 10-20.	..	9,665
Petersburg, June 20-30.	..	5,316
Total (more men than were in Lee's army)		<hr/> .69,532

To give positively correct figures of the Confederate losses is an impossibility, but they could not have exceeded 25,000 men. Estimating upon the basis of 64,000 men (May 14), and taking into consideration the reënforcements from May 1-June 30, there are but 19,500 men unaccounted for at the end of that period. These include the killed, the permanently disabled, the deserters, the sick, and the stragglers.

## CHAPTER XLIV

THE MINE FIASCO. JULY 30, 1864

**B**ARRING the picket firing along the lines and an occasional cannonading, the month of July, 1864, was unusually quiet. No movement worthy of note occurred until the 26th, when a march of the enemy's infantry and cavalry to the north side of the James River was inaugurated. Their first object on this occasion was to treat our men on that side of the river to a surprise, and to place their cavalry, under General Sheridan, for the occupancy of the railroads leading into Richmond. The other was a stratagem to withdraw our forces from in front of Petersburg, and thus afford opportunity to themselves to capture our lines located there. In the first they met with absolute failure, but in the second they were partially successful.

Early on the morning of the 27th the Second Corps, under Gen. W. S. Hancock, and the cavalry corps under General Sheridan, crossed the upper and lower bridges, at Deep Bottom, and were massed behind a body of oak timber near the bridge-heads. Not long after daylight skirmishers were thrown out toward the right, and a demonstration made by the brigade under command of Brigadier-General Foster, of the Tenth Corps, who held position on that side of the river in our front. In the meanwhile the cavalry moved to the right, in the direction of Malvern, and on the New Market road.

This reconnoissance occasioned some sharp fighting between General Kershaw's division of Confederates and the enemy, in which, however, the losses were light, notwithstanding the capture of four guns belonging to the Rockbridge Artillery, which capture resulted as a consequence of the infantry's supports having given way under the pressure. The advance being checked very soon thereafter, the fighting between the infantry ceased. Until the night of the 29th the enemy retained his position, when the Second Corps recrossed, and posted itself in rear of the Union lines in front of Petersburg. The following is the sequel to the foregoing demonstration :



Artillery, muskets, and sabres had been the implements of warfare employed between the contending armies for a period of three months' duration. In each succeeding day from dawn till dark, Death's finger pointed unremittingly to the blue and gray, as in ranks they faced each other. The iron, lead, and steel had cleft the air and hewn great gaps in the lines of each, until well-nigh one hundred thousand had felt the sting of fire to a greater or less degree. With thousands life's "fitful fever" was over, and they slept that sleep from which "no sound could awake them to battle again." Other thousands maimed and scarred will part company with these marks of honorable service only when they have "crossed over the river" to the final bivouac.

These three months' outpouring of metallic storm had failed in its purpose of disorganizing the ranks of this noblest of all armies; for those who composed this army battled for their hearth-stones and the dear ones who blessed them, their birth-right, and the honor of their section. Honor and right were their watchword. Invincible they stood until, from lack of nutriment that it was impossible to obtain, the emaciation,—which for some time had been apparent, but unheeded,—had been succeeded in many instances by physical exhaustion.

When the onslaughts at the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, North Anna, and Cold Harbor had ceased, the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia, on the verge of a prolonged siege, stood face to face in front of Petersburg. The "hammering process," inaugurated and adopted by General Grant, had thus far failed to exhibit its virtue; since his hammers, though of iron, lead and steel, had proved inadequate to open a way for the annihilation of the Confederate army and the capture of Richmond.

Having fought it out on that line all the summer, with disappointment staring him in the face, the Federal giant decided to change his tactics, and resort to the pick, spade, and powder.

Finding the belt of steel and fire that confronted him at Petersburg impenetrable overland, a subterranean passage through which to enforce his plan of attack was determined upon, and in the conviction that the capture of Petersburg would ensure the speedy fall of Richmond, he diligently pushed forward the underground project.

As early as June 25th mining operations were commenced and carried on by Colonel Pleasants and his regiment, the Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, which was composed of miners from

Schuylkill County. The Confederate front to be undermined and blown up was a salient located east of the city, and about a half mile southeast of Blandford Cemetery, known as Elliott's, or Pegram's, salient. The main gallery leading from the rear of the Federal lines to the side galleries underneath the earthworks was five hundred and twenty-two feet long, while the side galleries were each forty feet long. Eight magazines were placed in the lateral galleries—two at each end—and the remaining four in pairs equidistant from one another and the ends of the galleries. The mine was ready for charging on the 22nd of July. On the 28th 8000 pounds of powder were deposited therein, the proper trenches, fuses and wires arranged, and the trap was in readiness to be sprung.

The time decided upon for the explosion of the mine was Saturday, July 30, at 3:30 a. m. As before mentioned, the corps of Hancock, with the cavalry, had crossed to the north side of the James River to demonstrate against our lines in that vicinity. This corps was recalled by General Grant on the night of the 29th, and moving back, took position in rear of the massed columns, back of the mine.

The Ninth Corps (General Burnside's) formed the attacking columns, supported on the right by the Eighteenth Corps (General Ord's), and on the left by the Fifth Corps (General Warren's). Five of the eight Confederate divisions had been marched to the north side of the James, in anticipation of an attack in that quarter, leaving for the defense of Petersburg barely 15,000 men, while the Federals, massing for the attack, numbered fully 50,000 well-fed veterans. Surely victory seemed staring them in the face, and to conquer then and there was a matter not to be questioned this time!

To the Union soldiers the night of the 29th of July was a night of bustling excitement, while to the unsuspecting Confederates there was peace and restfulness from the work of the day. The early dawn was beginning to brighten the eastern sky, and there was no explosion of the mine. The time allotted to it had passed, and the expectant beneficiaries were in a state of painful suspense, as minute after minute passed,—minutes that seemed hours to the waiters and watchers in blue.

The occasion of the delay when ascertained was one most likely not to facilitate the result hoped for. The lighted fuse had gone out and this did not tend to allay anxiety, now at fever heat (at least, we may readily suppose so), with the Federal

officials. The discovery was made by a gallant sergeant of the Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, who volunteered to seek out the cause by going into the gallery and following up the fuse until he found it as we have explained, whereupon he refired it. The explosion took place at 4:44 a. m., and so tremendous was the force that the noise resembled somewhat that of the combined discharge of many heavy guns, and thus the breach by "pick and spade and powder" was effected.

The first visible effect upon the Union front line, all ready for the attack, was to disorganize and break their alignment, requiring five or ten minutes to restore order. They then dashed forward, halting as they arrived at the breach or Crater, each actuated by a desire to peer into the cavity; a short while thereafter, when a few straggling shots from our side sent the minie-balls whizzing in their vicinity, their impulse was to get into the hole, and the majority of them succeeded in accomplishing it.

The explosion had been of such power as to throw the earthworks immediately over the mine, with the artillery and infantry therein, high into the air in a dense cloud of smoke,—the mass of matter returning to terra firma a shower of earth, timbers, broken gun-carriages, muskets, and horribly mutilated human bodies. The Crater formed by the upheaval of earth in such quantity (according to actual measurement made by Lieut. Edwin N. Wise, First Engineer Troops, on the afternoon of that day) was 126 feet long at the top, 69 feet long at the bottom; 87 feet wide at the top and 38 feet wide at the bottom, while the depth from the top of the parapet was about 25 feet.

Pegram's battery of four guns, and five companies of the Twenty-second South Carolina, in the salient, and four companies of the Eighteenth South Carolina, on the left of the battery, were all blown up, or destroyed by the falling earth. The number from these commands known to have been killed or wounded was 278. Two officers and seventy-four men of the Eighteenth South Carolina were missing, some of whom were probably killed by the falling earth, but it is believed that most of them were captured.

The great Fiasco, heralded for weeks in their daily papers, was on hand. Fifty thousand men, white and colored, stood ready for the fray, and before the smoke had entirely cleared away from around the scene of destruction wrought by "pick, spade and powder," the mighty host moved forward to occupy the breach. It was not many minutes after the occupation of

the Crater,—and about two hundred yards of the adjacent lines,—by the enemy when the remaining members of Elliott's brigade opened fire upon the Federals from the parapets and traverses to the right and left of the captured line. This fire, the straggling shots of our artillery,—not yet aroused to the stern realities of the danger,—and the continuous din of the adversary's guns, as they blazed forth from every quarter of their lines, must have appeared to the looker-on as an indescribable volume of the solemn grandeur of sound. Between Burnside's men and Petersburg the way was now open to Cemetery Hill, the coveted goal of the Federal hopes,—the key to the possession and downfall of Richmond. They had entered the *breach* and captured the lines! but *that hole* formed so secure an abiding place that efforts to rescue its occupants were unavailing.

In the meantime our men were rallying, and soon the batteries to the right and left of the punctured lines were busily distributing their canister and shells, sweeping the front and rear of the positions held by the foe. The mortars on the Baxter Road participated in the bombardment and rendered no little assistance in keeping our opponents at a stand. The latter, however, persisted in pushing their columns forward through the covered ways, to swarm about the heart-sickening Crater, now squirming with thousands of disorganized, demoralized men. A portion of Wilcox's division was successful in gaining part of our lines south of the Crater, but our artillery fire and the fire from the musketry of the gallant men composing Elliott's brigade caused them to yield ground.

One hour had elapsed and no progress in gaining a foothold on Cemetery Hill was made. Hand to hand fighting had been considerably resorted to in the pits, traverses, and bomb-proofs, in which many of our men had taken refuge, and numbers on both sides were killed with the bayonet. The following truthful and graphic account of the continuation of this battle is extracted from the address of Capt. W. Gordon McCabe on the "Defense of Petersburg."

Now was the crisis of the day; and fortunate was it for maiden and matron of Petersburg that even at this moment there was filing into the ravine, between Cemetery Hill and the drunken battalions of Ferrero, a stern army of silent men, clad in faded gray, resolved with grim resolve to avert from the mother-town a fate as dreadful as that which marked the three days' sack of Badagos.

Lee, informed of the disaster at 6:10 a. m., had bidden his aide,

Col. Charles Venable, to ride quickly to the right of the army and bring up two brigades of Anderson's old division, commanded by Mahone, for time was too precious to observe military etiquette and send orders through Hill. Shortly after, the General-in-Chief reached the front in person, and all men took heart when they descried the grave and gracious face and "Traveller" stepping proudly, as if conscious that he bore upon his back the weight of a nation. Beauregard was already at the Gee House, a commanding position, five hundred yards in rear of the Crater, and Hill had galloped to the right to organize an attacking column, and had ordered down Pegram; and even now the light batteries of Brander and Ellett were rattling through the town at a sharp trot, with cannoniers mounted, the sweet, serene face of their boy-colonel lit up with that glow which to his men meant hotly-impending fight.

Venable had sped upon his mission, and found Mahone's men already standing to their arms; but the Federals, from their lofty "lookouts," were busily interchanging signals, and to uncover such a length of front without exciting observation demanded the nicest precaution. Yet was the difficulty overcome by a simple device, for the men being ordered to drop back one by one, as if going for water, obeyed with such intelligence, that Warren continued to report to Meade that not a man had left his front.

Then forming in the ravine to the rear, the men of the Virginia and Georgia brigades came pressing down the valley with swift, swinging stride,—not with the discontented bearing of soldiers whose discipline alone carries them to what they feel to be a scene of fruitless sacrifice, but with the glad alacrity and aggressive ardor of men impatient for battle, and who, from long knowledge of war, are conscious that Fortune has placed within their grasp an opportunity which, by the magic touch of veteran steel, may be transformed into "swift-winged victory."

Halting for a moment in rear of the "Ragland House," Mahone bade his men strip off blankets and knapsacks and prepare for battle.

Then, riding quickly to the front, while the troops marched in single file along the covered-way, he drew rein at Bushrod Johnson's headquarters, and reported in person to Beauregard. Informed that Johnson would assist in the attack with the outlying troops about the Crater, he rode still further to the front, dismounted, and pushing along the covered-way from the Plank Road, came out into the ravine, in which he afterwards formed his men. Mounting the embankment at the head of the covered-way, he descried within 160 yards a forest of glittering bayonets, and beyond, floating proudly from the captured works, eleven Union flags. Estimating rapidly from the hostile colors the probable force in his front, he at once dispatched his courier to bring up the Ala-

bama brigade from the right, assuming thereby a grave responsibility. Yet was the wisdom of the decision vindicated by the event.

Scarcely had the order been given, when the head of the Virginia brigade began to debouch from the covered-way. Directing Colonel Weisiger, its commanding officer, to file to the right and form line of battle, Mahone stood at the angle speaking quietly and cheerily to the men. Silently and quickly they moved out, and formed with that precision dear to every soldier's eye: the Sharpshooters leading, followed by the Sixth, Sixteenth, Sixty-first, Forty-first, and Twelfth Virginia,—the men of Second Manassas and Crampton's Gap.

But one caution was given,—to reserve their fire until they reached the brink of the ditch; but one exhortation,—that they were counted on to do this work, and do it quickly.

Now the leading regiment of the Georgia brigade began to move out when suddenly a brave Federal officer, seizing the colors, called on his men to charge. Descrying this hostile movement on the instant, Weisiger,—a veteran of stern countenance which did not belie the personal intrepidity of the man,—uttered to the Virginians the simple word, "Forward!"

Then the Sharpshooters and the men of the Sixth on the right, running swiftly forward,—for there was the greater distance to traverse,—the whole line sprang along the crest, and there burst from more than eight hundred warlike voices that fierce yell which no man ever yet heard unmoved on field of battle. Storms of case-shot from the right mingled with the tempest of bullets which smote upon them from the front; yet was there no answering volley, for these were veterans, whose fiery enthusiasm had been wrought to a finer temper by the stern code of discipline, and even in the tumult the men did not forget their orders. Still pressing forward with steady fury, while the enemy, appalled by the inexorable advance, gave ground, they reached the ditch of the inner works; then one volley crashed from the whole line, and the Sixth and Sixteenth, with the Sharpshooters, clutching their empty guns and redoubling their fierce cries, leaped over the retrenched cavalier,—and all down the line the dreadful work of the bayonet began.

How long it lasted none may say with certainty, for in those fierce moments no man heeded time, no man asked, no man gave quarter; but in an incredibly brief space, as seemed to those who looked on, the whole of the advanced line north of the Crater was retaken, the enemy in headlong flight, and the tattered battle-flags planted along the parapets from left to right told Lee at the Gee House that from this nettle Danger, Valor had plucked the flower Safety for an army.

Redoubling the sharpshooters on his right, Mahone kept down

all fire from the Crater, the vast rim of which frowned down upon the lower line occupied by his troops.

And now the scene within the horrid pit was such as might be fitly portrayed only by the pen of Dante after he had trod "nine-circled Hell." From the great mortars to the right and left, huge missiles, describing graceful curves, fell at regular intervals with dreadful accuracy and burst among the helpless masses huddled together, and every explosion was followed by piteous cries, and oftentimes the very air seemed darkened by flying human limbs. Haskell, too, had moved up his Eprouvette mortars among the men of the Sixteenth Virginia,—so close, indeed, that his powder-charge was but one ounce and a half,—and, without intermission, the storm of fire beat upon the helpless men imprisoned within.

Mahone's men watched with great interest this easy method of reaching troops behind cover, and then, with the imitative ingenuity of soldiers, gleefully gathered up the countless muskets with bayonets fixed, which had been abandoned by the enemy, and propelled them with such nice skill that they came down upon Ledlies' men "like the rain of the Norman arrows at Hastings."

At half-past ten, the Georgia brigade advanced and attempted to dislodge Wilcox's men, who still held a portion of the lines south of the Crater, but so closely was every inch of the ground searched by artillery, so biting was the fire of musketry, that, obliquing to their left, they sought cover behind the cavalier-trench won by the Virginia brigade,—many officers and men testifying by their blood how gallantly the venture had been essayed.

Half an hour later, the Alabamians, under Saunders, arrived, but further attack was postponed until after 1 p. m., in order to arrange for coöperation from Colquett on the right. Sharply to the minute agreed upon, the assaulting line moved forward, and with such astonishing rapidity did these glorious soldiers rush across the intervening space that, ere their first wild cries subsided, their battle-flags had crowned the works. The Confederate batteries were now ordered to cease firing, and forty volunteers were called for to assault the Crater, but so many of the Alabamians offered themselves for the service that the ordinary system of detail was necessary. Happily, before the assaulting party could be formed, a white handkerchief, made fast to a ramrod, was projected above the edge of the Crater, and, after a brief pause, a motley mass of prisoners poured over the side and ran for their lives to the rear.

By one o'clock, or thereabout, the last Federal not driven from our lines had been captured. "Pick, spade and powder," like shot, shell and sabre, had failed to open the way to Petersburg.

Thus ended the mighty Fiasco, unparalleled in the history of

nations. General Grant designated it as "This miserable failure," and Le(e)s Misérables occasioned it. It is a picture to be handed down to posterity as the puniest attempt,—of which there exists any record,—to capture the breastworks of an enemy.

The Federal losses in this attempt to carry our lines amounted to about 5000 men, including the prisoners. Our losses approximated 1250. Among those captured from them was Brigadier-General Bartlett, who had a wooden leg, in which he had received a wound, which was probably the cause of his being taken. It disabled him for retreat with his companions when the final charge was made. One hundred and thirty-three dead soldiers were buried in the bottom of the Crater on the 31st of July, among whom were negroes and Indians. This work of interment was performed by some of the members of the First Regiment of Engineer Troops, who had commenced the work of sinking shafts in the Crater in order to find the galleries leading to the magazines in which the enemy had placed the powder.

On the 1st of August a flag of truce was granted the Federal commander for the purpose of allowing him to bury his dead (the greater part of this work was done by the negro soldiers), and thus it was that for the first time in many weeks, a general quiet reigned for four hours on the lines at Petersburg.



## CHAPTER XLV

MINOR MOVEMENTS TO RIGHT AND LEFT. AUGUST-OCTOBER, 1864

**I**MMEDIATELY upon the expiration of the truce mentioned in the previous chapter, the guns and mortars from the Federal lines re-opened. The sharp crack of the sharpshooters' rifles was again heard, and the cutting down of brave men, on both sides, became the daily routine. This source of death and wounds put numbers of both the blue and gray *hors-de-combat*; in the aggregate the losses were severe.

The early days of August were somewhat free from excitement. On the night of the 5th, a small mine that we had completed and primed under a sap located a short distance in front of Gracie's Salient was fired, completely demolishing the work under the gabions. The enemy were thrown into dire confusion, probably thinking we were about to make an assault; but as we had no such intention, the scare closed with a fierce artillery duel. Very little damage to the enemy attended this expenditure of time and labor in the construction of the gallery and mine.

At City Point on the 9th, at 11:40 a. m., an ordnance barge of the enemy was exploded by an infernal machine surreptitiously placed therein by one of the soldiers of our Secret Service. The effect was terrific. An adjoining barge filled with powder was also exploded, and the large frame wharf building, containing large quantities of stores, was blown to atoms; a great deal of debris was scattered about the yard of General Grant's headquarters, wounding one of his staff, killing a mounted orderly and several horses, and wounding others. The pecuniary damage is said to have amounted to millions of dollars. The loss of life,—according to Grant's dispatch to Halleck,—places the killed at 43, and the wounded at 126.

Another great move, under the command of General Hancock,—with his own and Tenth Corps, and Gregg's division of cavalry,—was made on the 14th, to the north side of the James, Deep Bottom being the base of operations. For several days the booming of artillery and the rattle of musketry was commingled,

but the object of the enemy was frustrated. Three of our divisions, from the Petersburg lines, and three regiments, from the Howlett's line, reënforced our men. The fighting was very severe at times, and the losses heavy, especially to the Federals, who were the attacking party. During the night of the 20th the enemy's troops were withdrawn, and they returned to their camps. Aggregate Union losses ("War Records"): 2901. There is no data for our losses, but General Lee in a dispatch to the Secretary of War, says: "Our loss was small."

At this period the men of the Army of Northern Virginia were never more defiant,—never more confident of the infallibility of their great leader. The hostile ranks continued to drop their fire into each other from rifle and mortar, and brave men had their blood shed daily. The demoralization of the Federals had gone far in lessening General Grant's opportunities of capturing Richmond by way of the north side or of forcing a passage through the scattered ranks of the ragged soldiers in front of Petersburg. The only practicable line of progression was by his "Thor hammer" tactics against the Confederate right. The 18th of the month was the beginning of another rough stroke in this direction, and one that damaged the Confederate cause more than any previous thrust: the loss of the Weldon Railroad.

Early on that day the Fifth Corps, under General Warren, moved from the trenches in front of Petersburg, and the general, pressing forward his columns, struck the Weldon road at the Globe Tavern, some three miles from the Jerusalem Plank Road,—the Federal left. His only opposition was a small body of cavalry, under that intrepid leader, Dearing, who fell back skirmishing, as the head of Warren's column advanced. After taking possession of the road the enemy advanced Ayres' division to the north along the railroad. In this movement Ayres came in contact with two small brigades and one battery of artillery (Brander's, of Pegram's battalion), under the command of that gallant soldier, General Heth, who, without counting numbers, immediately pressed hard against Ayres' front.

The contest was spirited, and waxed hot. The enemy was forced back to their main body, losing heavily. According to Warren's report ("War Records"), his loss was 936, including 392 prisoners. Four divisions of infantry and one brigade of artillery are represented in this list.

After his defeat, Warren began to fortify his position, and by the morning of the 19th his lines were very strong. On this

date he was reënforced by three divisions of the Ninth Corps, and our forces were strengthened by the addition of two brigades of Mahone's division,—under that general,—and three batteries of Pegram's battalion of artillery.

About four p. m., on this date, another attempt was made to force the enemy from the Weldon Road. The attack, under Gen. A. P. Hill, was made near the Davis House, and the Federals were again driven back into the intrenchments, with severe loss, including 2518 prisoners, admitted by General Warren.

General Beauregard's dispatch to the Secretary of War says:

General Hill attacked yesterday afternoon enemy's Fifth Corps, under Warren, at Davis house, on Weldon railroad, three miles from city, defeating him and capturing about 2,700 prisoners, including 1 brigadier-general and many field officers. Losses on both sides in killed and wounded not yet reported. Believed not to be great on ours.

General Warren has the following in his report:

At 4:15 p. m., before this was accomplished and reported to me, the enemy broke through this picket line with heavy force in column of fours, left in front, and facing to the right, swept rapidly down to our left in rear of General Crawford's line. At the same time General Ayres and signal officers reported a heavy force on my front along the railroad. My line was so extended that two regiments of the Pennsylvania Reserve Veterans, of General Crawford's division, were all on as a skirmish line, and the enemy passed quite in their rear. Colonel Wheelock's brigade fought well and lost comparatively little. So much confusion, however, was produced by the men falling back, and masking the fire of those in line, that all General Crawford's line was compelled to fall back, and also the right of General Ayres' division. Colonel Lyle's brigade lost very heavily in prisoners, and General Hays, commanding First Brigade of General Ayres' division, was captured. General Crawford was at one time quite surrounded by the enemy.

The killed, wounded and missing in this day's battle,—a loss admitted by the enemy,—were 2896.<sup>1</sup>

The 20th was comparatively quiet. The Federals occupied it in posting their lines in positions favorable for artillery, and our side in preparing for another assault, hoping to be able to force them from the railroad. In this, however, we were disappointed, for General Hill had but six small brigades and 12

<sup>1</sup> *War Records.*

pieces of Pegram's artillery with which to make the attack. The attack was made on the morning of the 21st, and after driving the enemy from all of his front lines back upon his intrenchments, the entire front of which was swept by his artillery, we were forced to fall back.

The following is from General Lee's dispatch, dated August 21:

This morning General Hill attacked his position on Weldon railroad. Drove him from his advanced lines to his main entrenchments, from which he was not dislodged. Over 300 prisoners, exclusive of wounded, were captured. Our loss was principally in Haygood's brigade, which mounted enemy's intrenchments. Supports failing, many were captured.

We clip the following quotation from General Warren's report:

August 21, the enemy at 9 a. m. drove in my pickets on the north and west and opened with about thirty pieces of artillery, crossing his fire at right angles over my position. The timber, however, prevented his artillerymen from having any good view of our lines. At 10 a. m. he made an assault all along the north and west of my position, but was everywhere repulsed. His intention to outflank us on the left was completely frustrated. Our artillery did excellent execution and broke the enemy's line in places before coming in good musketry range. Our skirmish line was immediately advanced, and 339 men and 39 officers taken as prisoners, besides 139 rebel wounded were brought in, among whom were Col. E. C. Council, Sixteenth Mississippi, and Lieut.-Col. S. B. Thomas, Twelfth Mississippi. General Haygood's brigade struck a part of our line where the troops were *en échelon* and they found themselves almost surrounded, and every one thinking they had surrendered, ceased firing. Troops immediately advanced to bring them in, when their officers commenced firing, and Captain Daily, provost-marshal of the Fourth Division, was shot by General Haygood. In the mixed condition of our men and the enemy, our line could not fire, and many of the enemy escaped.

In regard to the gallant effort made by Brig.-Gen. Johnson Haygood and his brigade, we quote from his report.

When the line had reached the enemy's works, some 200 men, having gotten into a reëntering angle, where they were exposed to a severe cross-fire, became confused, and a mounted officer of the enemy, galloping out of a sally-port, seized the colors of the Twen-

ty-seventh Regiment and called upon them to surrender. Several officers and men began to surrender, but had not been carried in. Observing this I made my way to them from the part of the line upon which I was, calling to the men to shoot him. They either did not hear me or were bewildered by the surrender of part of their number, and failed to do so. When I got up to him I demanded the colors from him, and that he should go back into his works, telling him that he was free to do so. He commenced arguing with me upon our desperate position, and I cut him short, demanding a categorical reply. He said "No," and I shot him from his horse. Giving the colors to my orderly and mounting his horse, I succeeded in withdrawing the men with as little loss as could have been expected from the terrible fire to which we were exposed in retiring. Probably half the men unhurt were brought off from this point.

The Federals having succeeded in making a stronghold of their position on the railroad, they connected it with their intrenchments covering the Jerusalem Plank Road. Between these two points they built strong earthworks, thereby extending their permanent lines a distance of some three miles further to their left.

On the 22nd of August General Miles' division, Second Corps, and Gregg's division of cavalry moved forward with instructions to continue the destruction of the railroad. The work was commenced that afternoon, and continued the following day, when Reams' Station,—some four miles beyond Warren's left,—was reached. The working parties were protected by infantry, and the cavalry picketed the flanks and watched the roads leading to Dinwiddie Court House. On the morning of the 24th, General Gibbon's division reënforced the railroad destroyers, and the work progressed as far as three miles beyond Reams' Station.

Our general having been informed of the enemy's movements and their position, took steps to thwart their designs. Calling upon General Hill, he ordered him, with Cooke's and McKee's North Carolina brigades, under General Heth, and Lane's North Carolina brigade, under General Conner, with Pegram's artillery, to attack him. These troops were gallantly assisted by General Hampton and his division of cavalry.

General Lee's report of the engagement is as follows:

General A. P. Hill attacked the enemy in his intrenchments at Reams' Station yesterday evening (25th), and at the second assault carried his entire line.

One line of breastworks was carried by the cavalry under Gen-

eral Hampton with great gallantry, who contributed largely to the success of the day. Seven stands of colors, 2,000 prisoners, and 9 pieces of artillery are in our possession. The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded is reported to be heavy, ours relatively small. Our profound gratitude is due to the Giver of all victory, and our thanks to the brave men and officers engaged.

Extract from General Hampton's report:

After consultation with General Hill I was directed to strike the Petersburg and Weldon Railroad, with my main force, on the left flank of the enemy, whilst another portion of my command was to cover the approach of General Hill on Reams' Station. I ordered General Barringer to take his own brigade up the Halifax Road toward Malone's Crossing, and to send Chambliss' brigade, under command of Col. J. Lucius Davis, up Malone's road, across Malone's Bridge, to the same point. This latter brigade was supported by Rosser's and Young's brigades, under command of Major-General Butler, General Rosser commanding his own, and Colonel Wright, Young's brigade. Dunovant's brigade was left in reserve, to protect the rear and flank of General Hill. These dispositions having been made, I crossed with the column at Malone's Bridge, and met the advance pickets of the enemy a short distance beyond at 9 a. m. These were driven in; when the enemy, in a strong position and some force, was encountered. Colonel Davis dismounted a portion of his brigade, and immediately engaged them. After a sharp fight the enemy gave way, falling back toward Malone's Crossing. We pursued him vigorously and rapidly, forcing all the cavalry we met to retreat toward Reams' Station, leaving their dead and wounded on the ground. McGregor brought a section of his battery up at this moment, and by a rapid and well-directed fire contributed greatly to the confusion of the enemy. Their guns were admirably served during the whole engagement; and I beg to express my entire satisfaction at the conduct of Captain McGregor and his men. The enemy brought their infantry to take the place of their cavalry, deploying a heavy force in my front, whilst they attempted to turn both my flanks. In this they were foiled, and I held my ground steadily. In the meantime General Hill was notified of the condition of affairs and the position of the enemy, with a suggestion that he should attack promptly. He replied that he would do so, and he desired me to endeavor to draw the enemy down the railroad, so that he could take them in the rear. I withdrew my lines about 400 yards, but the enemy followed with great caution. General Barringer, whom I had sent with his brigade to the east of the railroad, reported that he had met a strong force of infantry, with cavalry, on the road by which he was advancing. I ordered him to picket the road strongly, and to join me with his command

at Malone's Crossing. This he did just as my line was retired; and I dismounted the Second North Carolina Regiment, under Colonel Roberts, ordering him to take position on the right of the line and to attempt to turn the flank of the enemy, if an opportunity offered. At 5 p. m. the artillery of General Hill opened fire, and I at once ordered an advance of my whole line, which was then formed across the railroad at Malone's Crossing. This order was promptly obeyed, and the enemy gave way. They were driven to their works near Reams' Station, giving up several positions which they had fortified. Colonel Roberts, with his regiment, charged here one line of rifle-pits, carrying it handsomely, and capturing from 60 to 75 prisoners. In the meantime, seeing that General Hill was forcing the enemy back from the west of the railroad into their works around the station, I withdrew all my force from that side of the road and formed a line, with Chambliss' brigade on the left, the North Carolina brigade in the center, and Young's brigade on the right. Rosser formed a second line to support the first, all being dismounted. Some regiments were kept mounted in case cavalry should be needed. The line being formed, the commanding officers were directed to keep the left flank on the railroad, advancing slowly, while the right swung round to strike the rear of the enemy, who were in position behind the railroad bank, and in a work which ran east perpendicularly to the railroad for some distance, then, turning north, kept parallel with the railroad, enveloping Oak Grove Church. The ground over which my troops advanced was very difficult, and it had been rendered more so by the enemy, who had cut down the timber. In spite of this, and under a heavy fire of artillery and musketry, the line advanced steadily, driving the enemy into his works. Here he made a stubborn stand, and for a few moments checked our advance; but the spirit of the men was so fine that they charged the breastworks with the utmost gallantry, carried them, and captured the force holding them. This ended the fighting of the day, my men having been engaged for twelve hours.

From General Hancock's (Federal) report:

Meanwhile the enemy were preparing their forces for a final attack, which was inaugurated about 5 p. m. by a heavy artillery fire, which, while it did little actual damage, had its effect in demoralizing a portion of the command exposed to a reverse fire, owing to the faulty location of the rifle-pits, as before explained. The shelling continued for about fifteen minutes, when it was followed by an assault on General Miles' front, opposite the position held by the Consolidated Brigade and the Fourth Brigade. Just at the time when a few minutes' resistance would have secured the repulse of the enemy, who were thrown into considerable disorder by the

severity of the fire they were subjected to and the obstacles to their advance, a part of the line (composed of the Seventh, Fifty-second, and Thirty-ninth New York) gave way in confusion. At the same time a break occurred on the right of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth and One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York. A small brigade of the Second Division, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Rugg, which had previously been sent as a reserve to General Miles, was ordered forward at once to fill up the gap, but the brigade could neither be made to go forward nor fire. McKnight's battery, under Lieutenant Dauchy, Twelfth New York Artillery (Battery), was then turned on the opening, doing great execution, but the enemy advanced along the rifle-pits, taking possession of the battery and turning one gun upon our own troops. On the left of the break in the line was Murphy's brigade, of the Second Division, which was driven back, and two batteries (B, First Rhode Island Artillery, Lieutenant Perrin, and the Tenth Massachusetts Battery, Captain Sleeper), fell into the hands of the enemy after having been served with marked gallantry and losing a very large proportion of officers, men, and horses. I immediately ordered General Gibbon's division forward to retake the position and guns, but the order was responded to very feebly by his troops, the men falling back to their breastworks on receiving a slight fire from the enemy. The One Hundred and Fifty-second New York is reported to have behaved very badly here, running away without firing more than one or two shots. An attempt was made to get some of the troops of Gibbon's division to assist in this operation, but the commanders reported that their men could not be brought up to the advance. The enemy's dismounted cavalry now made an attack on the left, driving General Gibbon's division from its breastworks. This division offered very little resistance, though the attack was feeble compared with that of the enemy's infantry, and the enemy, elated at their easy success at this point, were pressing on with loud cheers when they were met by a heavy flank fire from the dismounted cavalry, occupying the extreme left, and their advance summarily checked.

A part of the captured guns was held by the enemy's skirmishers, and General Miles succeeded in recapturing one, drawing it from the field to the wood within our lines. Owing to some failure to make it known that the piece had been recovered, it was unfortunately abandoned when the troops withdrew, making a total of nine guns lost during the action.

From Maj.-Gen. John Gibbon's report:

About 5 p. m. the enemy, having placed his batteries, opened a heavy fire,—most of which took my part of the line in reverse.



Soon afterward he made his assault on General Miles' line, from which a portion of my First Brigade had been withdrawn to strengthen mine, under the impression that an attack was to be made there. The enemy broke through General Miles' line and pushing forward his troops, appeared to be for a time carrying everything before him. His fire taking my line in reverse, I shifted my men to the opposite side of the parapet, prepared to resist his farther advance; but this was checked by the steadiness of a portion of Miles' division, and my division was then ordered forward by General Hancock to attack the enemy and retake the breastworks. In the attempt to obey this order, that portion of the division with me did not sustain its previous reputation, and, demoralized, partly by the shelling and musketry fire in its rear, partly by the refugees from other parts of the line, retired after a very feeble effort, under a very slight fire, in great confusion, every effort of myself and staff failing to arrest the rout until the breastwork was reached. Soon after this the enemy attacked my line, the men again shifting to the inside of the parapet. Besides the fire from the front, which, however, was very feeble, they were subjected to a heavy artillery and musketry fire from the right flank, where the enemy turned our own guns upon us. The men soon gave way in great confusion and gave up the breastworks almost without resistance, and were partially rallied in the woods behind the right wing. The result of this action was a source of great mortification to me, as I am confident but for the bad conduct of my division the battle would have terminated in our favor, even after the enemy had broken through General Miles' line. I can only account for the unsteadiness shown by my men by the fact that so many of my best officers and men have been lost on this campaign that the command is in a great measure disorganized.

This battle was a great Confederate victory, brought about by the superb manner in which our troops were handled.

The enemy's losses aggregated 2742 (according to the "War Records"), while ours footed up 720 (A. P. Hills' report).

August closed with little of importance to note. Skirmishing continued along the lines, now some thirty miles in length, and kept the men in the trenches always on the alert.

September opened quietly. Lee's men were short of fresh meat, it being a rarity for the Commissary Department to supply this luxury. General Hampton, who always managed things in a generous way, undertook to draw on the Federal larder. Ascertaining that General Grant's herd of fine cattle were grazing in the vicinity of Sycamore Church, in rear of his lines, he determined to attempt their capture. At daylight of the 16th, an

attack was made upon the enemy's skirmish line west of the Jerusalem Plank Road, and he was driven in upon his intrenchments. At the same time his position north of the Norfolk railroad was attacked by Hampton, who captured 300 of the soldiers guarding the cattle (some 2486 head), and a lot of wagons and horses. Surrounding the herd he drove it toward his own lines. Though attacked in the afternoon by the enemy's cavalry, he succeeded in saving his prize, after driving the enemy back, and reached his lines in safety. His loss did not exceed 61 men. In this manner, not only upon this but upon many other occasions, was our army supplied with fresh beef.

Until the 29th of September there was nothing of great importance to note. On this day General Grant was very anxious to prevent troops being sent to General Early in the Valley, and with this object in view he made demonstrations on both the right and left of our lines. Strenuous efforts to break through our lines on the north side of the James were partially successful. Fort Harrison, a commanding salient on the lines, was captured by a *coup-de-main* by the troops of General Butler, assisted by the Eighteenth Corps.

This fort was garrisoned by 150 Confederates. In the afternoon Fort Gilmore, another strong position nearby, was assaulted, but the timely arrival of Law's brigade, under General Field, to the assistance of the brigades of Benning and Gregg, proved sufficient to repulse all the attempts of the enemy. Reënforcements were brought from Petersburg and the South side, and by the morning of the 30th preparations were complete for an attempt to retake Fort Harrison. The brigades of Law, Anderson, Bratton, Clingman, and Colquitt were moved forward, but after three unsuccessful assaults, these were withdrawn to the intermediate lines. The fighting was stubborn on both sides, and the losses heavy.

Several other minor affairs at New Market and Laurel Hill, further to our left, also occurred on this date. The losses of the Federals ("War Records") in these battles aggregated 3327. There is no data from which to compute our losses, but they were very much less than the enemy's.

While these trying occurrences were being enacted on the north side of the James, the enemy's forces were making great efforts to extend their left. On the 30th of September their infantry broke through a portion of our line held by the artillery, on the Squirrel Level Road, in the vicinity of Poplar Spring

Church, but they were easily driven back by General Heth, under Gen. A. P. Hill, who reported that they were severely punished, with a loss of 400 prisoners.

On the right of Heth General Hampton operated with his gallant cavalry corps, and succeeded in forcing the Federals back and capturing 500 prisoners, including 17 officers. Brander's and Elliott's batteries, of Pegram's artillery participated in the attack of Heth and rendered efficient service. The Federal troops encountered in these engagements were two divisions of the Fifth Corps, under General Warren, and two divisions of the Ninth Corps, under Major-General Parke. Gregg's cavalry at the same time moved further to their left and rear.

Extract from General Grant's dispatch to Major-General Halleck:

Late in the evening Potter's division, Ninth Corps, whilst moving to get to the left of Warren, near Poplar Spring Church, was vigorously assaulted by a superior force and driven back until re-enforced by Griffin's division, when the enemy were checked, General Meade thinks, with heavy loss. Potter lost from his division a considerable number killed, wounded, and captured. The enemy are now threatening our left in considerable force. Our line extends full two miles west of the Weldon railroad with the left turned back.

It is not out of place to note here that General Parke reports a loss of 1994 men from his two divisions, occasioned by the defeat mentioned in the above dispatch.

On the 1st of October a heavy rain set in and continued throughout the day. That afternoon the Federals were re-enforced by the Third division, Second Corps, and on the following day were advanced, and developed our position, which they found to be strong. They were then withdrawn, and began the erection of intrenchments, with redoubts.

At this time General Beauregard had been relieved of command at Petersburg, and been sent to the command of General Hood's army and the forces in Florida and in the vicinity of Charleston, S. C. General Forrest continued busy in the rear of Sherman in the West, tearing up railroads and cutting off his supplies. General Butler kept busy in the use of the pick and shovel in endeavoring to complete his great project known as the "Dutch Gap Canal," but the work was constantly under the fire of our artillery, and his progress slow. The heavy artillery duels

between the land batteries of the enemy near Dutch Gap and our batteries at the Howlett's house, varied somewhat the routine of life in the Howlett's line trenches.

Our ranks had become terribly thinned by the constant battling with the numerically greater forces of the enemy, but were still able to hold their own. The half-famished soldiers gave little heed to the numbers of their foes; their discipline was such that whenever called upon, like the automaton figures in a machine, they sprang forward to execute the orders of their superiors, never thinking of themselves any more than if they had been made of wood.

Quite a victory attended the arms of our soldiers on the north side early upon the morning of the 7th, at the Charles City road. A brigade of cavalry, supported by the divisions of Field and Hoke, made the attack upon the Federal right wing located on that road. The enemy were driven from two lines of intrenchments and forced back upon their main line near the New Market Road. The battle was spirited, and the enemy were kept on the move. Our trophies from this engagement were 9 pieces of artillery, 10 caissons, 100 horses, and 100 prisoners, with a quantity of intrenching tools and forage. Our losses were light, not exceeding 200. In this battle the noble General Gregg fell at the head of his men. The enemy's loss, according to the "War Records" was 458.

Another affair occurred on the 13th, when the enemy drove in our pickets on the Charles City Road, and endeavored to turn General Field's left, but without success. Attempts to feel our lines and break through were made by the enemy at times during the day, but they all failed, and by night everything was quiet.

The losses were light on both sides.

## CHAPTER XLVI

HATCHER'S RUN. OCTOBER 27, 1864

FROM the 15th to 27th of October nothing of great interest in the way of fighting features occurred on the lines at Petersburg. The picket firing and mortar shelling progressed in a regular routine way, and we were kept on the alert from an occasional sortie from the enemy upon the firing lines. These interesting battles in miniature were a source of annoyance at times, but in the long run they proved profitable to the one side or the other side. A crook in the outer line needed straightening, hence a sally,—and in a brief space, sometimes not over twenty minutes, the wrong was righted, and the new line held and fortified by the aggressive party. Occasionally, the object sought was not attained.

The losses from this mode of warfare, though not apparently heavy, amounted to considerable in the aggregate. For instance: Maj.-Gen. B. R. Johnson reported for the month of October from his three small brigades, as his casualties: 28 killed, 119 wounded, and 24 missing. These included all losses sustained in the trenches, and one can readily imagine the danger to life under the circumstances described.

At this period, when a Confederate soldier desired to imbibe freely of the intoxicating cup, it required about 5 months of his pay to get on a drunk, for whiskey was selling from \$8.00 to \$10.00 a drink, and not of the best kind at those prices. This may have been one of the reasons why so little drunkenness was seen upon the streets of Petersburg. The principal cause, however, why so little drinking was indulged in, was that a spirit of grace seemed to pervade a greater portion of the army; numbers of those who avowed a lively hope in the sacrifice of the Man Christ Jesus sought places in the ranks, seeking for that inheritance allotted to his faithful followers. Nightly prayer and praise meetings were held in many of the regiments on the lines, and it was heart-thrilling to hear those songs of praise from bands of warriors, ready to obey the first summons to the field

of battle, where, perhaps, they were to meet death at the onset; and, while the heart thus thrilled with the melody of human voices, joy unspeakable was born of the knowledge that many in those ranks were doubly soldiers.

On the 27th of October a simultaneous attack was made by the Federal forces on the lines below Richmond, and on our right in the neighborhood of the Armstrong Mill, along the Boydton Plank Road. The advance on the north side of the James was general. The Tenth and Eighteenth Army Corps, with a division of cavalry, formed the column. These troops proceeded to invest our lines; but in every instance where they advanced, they were easily repulsed. Our artillery was most conspicuous in driving them back. Haskell's and Johnson's batteries, against our extreme left, and Hardaway's and Stark's battalions met the direct attack between the Darbytown road and Fort Harrison.

The reconnaissance of the enemy, for such General Grant calls it, continued the entire day. They withdrew the following morning after finding that there was not "a point unguarded."

The Federal losses aggregated 1603, including 698 prisoners.<sup>1</sup> Confederate losses very slight.

The movement to our right was of greater importance to our arms, being another attempt to get possession of the South Side railroad, and brought on one of those fights that had so frequently occurred in that vicinity.

The Ninth and Second Army Corps, with a part of the Fifth Corps and Gregg's division of cavalry, were the forces employed by the Federals. Our troops were commanded by General Hill, of Beaver Dam renown, who was greatly assisted by the cavalry of Gen. Wade Hampton. The battle which followed the confronting of these commands was sharp at times, and many fell on both sides.

The following extracts, taken from the "War Records" will facilitate the understanding of the movements.

From General Lee's report:

General Hill reports that the attack of General Heth upon the enemy on the Boydton Plank Road, mentioned in my dispatch last evening, was made by three brigades under General Mahone in front, and General Hampton in the rear. Mahone captured 400 prisoners, 3 stand of colors, and 6 pieces of artillery. The latter

<sup>1</sup> *War Records.*

could not be brought off, the enemy having possession of the bridge. In the attack subsequently made by the enemy General Mahone broke three lines of battle, and during the night the enemy retired from the Boydton road, leaving his wounded and more than 250 dead on the field.

Extract from General Hampton's report:

While Butler was attacking on the White Oak Road, Lee struck the enemy on the plank road and drove him handsomely. I passed to his line of battle and formed a junction between Butler and himself, thus enveloping the enemy on three sides. We had driven him in on all the roads, and he was massed in the field around the houses of Bond and Burgess. The night having grown very dark and a heavy rain coming on, I was forced to pause in my attack, but I ordered the line held all night, so that we might attack at daylight the next morning.

The plan of attack had been agreed on between General Heth and myself, but at 3:30 a. m. he informed me that he would not be able to get the troops he expected to operate with. This changed the plan, and in the morning the enemy was found to have retired from the field, leaving his dead and many wounded in my hands. I at once followed him, Dearing's brigade being in advance, and struck his rear guard between Dabney's and Armstrong's Mills. Dearing charged and drove him across the creek. He formed near Armstrong's house, and was again charged and driven, when he fell back behind his infantry lines. I then withdrew my command and the troops returned to camp.

General Grant says:

The attack on General Hancock, now that a report is received, proved to be a decided success. He repulsed the enemy and remained in his position, holding possession of the field until midnight, when he commenced withdrawing. Orders had been given for the withdrawal of the Second Corps before the attack was made. We lost no prisoners, except the usual stragglers who are always picked up.

General Meade's report has the following:

The movement was promptly made as directed, but instead of finding the enemy's line as expected, it was found to extend down the run nearly to Armstrong's Mill; was fully completed and very strongly fortified by slashings and abatis. The consequence was that Major-General Parke, after driving in the enemy's skirmishers, did not attempt to attack; but Major-General Warren, in developing

the enemy's position, made an unsuccessful effort with Gregory's brigade, of Griffin's division, to penetrate the lines.

About this time, 5 p. m., whilst Major-General Hancock was just about to attempt carrying the bridge in his front, the enemy debouched from the woods to his right and rear and attacked him vigorously, at the same time advancing on his left and attacking Gregg in the rear.

General Hancock sums up the day's proceedings in the following language:

Having moved in the morning, by order, without any reserve ammunition, I found myself seriously crippled for lack of it. This was particularly the case with the batteries, only one of which had a fair supply of ammunition, and this battery had lost both officers, and had but three men left per gun. The other batteries had expended nearly every round of ammunition. My command had been moving and fighting till after dark, and as a consequence was in considerable disorder. Quite a heavy rain was falling, and the wood road to Dabney's Mill, my only communication with the rest of the army, was seriously threatened by the enemy, and was becoming very bad. It was a question with me whether ammunition could be brought up and issued during the night, and I did not think my command could make a strong fight in the morning without it.

The Federals failed to get possession of the South Side Railroad. General Grant was upon the field the greater part of the day, and when he retired he gave General Hancock verbal orders to hold the position until the following morning. General Hancock commenced his withdrawal that night at 10 p. m.

Federal casualties (see "War Records"), 1758, including 564 prisoners.



## CHAPTER XLVII

HERE AND THERE IN THE RANKS. OCTOBER, 1864—FEBRUARY, 1865

THE rations issued to the Confederates at this period were scant. On the Howlett's line, occupied by the division of General Pickett, they consisted of a third of a pound of bacon, one pound of flour, and a tablespoonful of rice *per diem*, and yet the men were happy.

Our ranks were considerably increased in consequence of an order, recalling all able-bodied men on detached service back to their regiments, and during the lovely weather with which we were favored in October the soldiers became more buoyant and were more than ready to again meet the foe.

At this time the aggregate forces under General Lee did not exceed 35,000 men, while the Federals, according to the report of October 31 (see "War Records"), had 90,943 effectives, of all arms.

The month of November was ushered in with cool bracing weather, and in the midst of an almost perfect calm,—so far as the armies were concerned. The usual picket firing and occasional mortar shelling continued. Scouts, skirmishes, and several reconnaissances by the enemy occurred during the month, but no battles of the extraordinary kind were indulged in.

Several engagements between the land batteries and the enemy's gunboats had taken place on the river, but very little was accomplished by them on either side, except a great waste of powder and iron, attended by unmusical sounds.

Our soldiers were in the best of spirits. Though lacking in the good things of life, and living in the trenches amid the down-pour of rains and the slushy conditions always following the wet period, there was neither murmur of discomfort nor word of dissatisfaction uttered by them; for they were the "boys" of "Marse Robert," and any order given by him, their beloved Commander, was most cheerfully obeyed. Many were ragged and shoeless, and the keen cold winds caused them to hug the miniature camp-fires more closely. When on outpost duty in the rifle-pits beyond

the lines they had to grin and bear all their little inconveniences. To be ordered out of the trenches with a prospect of a brush with the enemy was a joy to every heart, and only when nothing followed such an order, as was often the case, did they become fretful and sorrowful.

The effective strength of the Federal army, November 30, aggregated 96,379, of all arms, while the strength of our ranks had not materially changed.

The first of December opened with a demonstration by Gregg's (Federal) cavalry upon the enemy's left, toward Stony Creek Station. After capturing a part of the small force (250) stationed there, and putting the residue to flight, Gregg burnt the depot with its contents, and destroyed all the shops and public buildings, including a train of cars with their belongings. He then withdrew, and as he was retiring, General Lee came up, attacked him and drove him a number of miles, with the loss of some prisoners. Our general was unable, however, to bring the Federals to an engagement. Our loss was reported as about 125 captured.

Lee's dispatch says:

The enemy left some dead at the depot, and along the route of his retreat.

On the 7th of December another simultaneous movement to the right and left was made by the enemy. His object was to further cut the Weldon Railroad. Butler's forces made threatening formations on the north side of the James to prevent Lee's detaching troops to reënforce the south side, while Warren, with 22,000 infantry, six batteries, and 4000 cavalry, marched to our right. According to General Warren's report, he destroyed the railroad from Nottoway to Hicks Ford, with but trifling opposition.

From General Lee's dispatches we quote as follows:

Hampton, after driving enemy's cavalry upon his infantry, on afternoon of 8th recrossed the Nottoway, and reached Belfield at daylight yesterday. In afternoon enemy attacked the position, but were successfully resisted.

About noon yesterday (9th) the First Division of Second Corps of enemy supporting their cavalry, forced back our cavalry pickets on the Vaughn road south of Appomattox, and advanced toward Dinwiddie Court House. To-day (10th) our cavalry, reënforced

by infantry, drove them back across Hatcher's Run, capturing a few prisoners, and reëstablished our lines.

These movements kept the Confederates busy for several days, and because of the length of the lines (about 35 miles), it required rapid marches and frequent alterations in the disposal of the troops to meet the assaults of the enemy.

The returns of the Federal army, December 31, aggregated 111,919 effectives, of all arms.<sup>1</sup>

Christmas day passed quietly. There were neither fine dinners nor jovial parties to be found among the troops in the trenches. The Seventeenth Virginia Infantry, Pickett's Division, however, fared more sumptuously; and its living members will ever remember the Grand Christmas Dinner sent them by the citizens living in the neighborhood of Flat Creek, in token of their appreciation of the defense of the bridges near that point in May, 1864.

The author quotes from a Richmond newspaper as follows:

The following is nobly conceived and beautifully said; and it comes from a regiment that, from the 18th of July, 1861, to this day, has signalized its courage on as many battle-fields, and won as proud a name as any that marches under the banners of our beloved Confederacy.

We take much pleasure in complying with the request to publish it:

"CAMP SEVENTEENTH VIRGINIA INFANTRY,  
"January 1, 1865.

"TO THE CITIZENS OF AMELIA COUNTY, VA.

"With much gratitude and pleasure, we acknowledge the receipt of your liberal donation of a Christmas dinner, through the hands of Rev. Mr. Littleton,—a donation all the more appreciated from its being unexpected.

"We accept it as a spontaneous overflow of kind sympathy for soldiers unknown to you, and whose only claim upon your notice was a simple act of duty. As refugees, we appreciate the donation highly, and still more the motive that prompted it. It adds another incentive to nerve us for coming trials and dangers in a cause so sacred and dear to us all, and we will ever look back upon it as a pleasant episode in our history as a Regiment.

"May a kind Providence ever protect the homes and hearthstones of such friendly and sympathetic hearts.

"We send you our greetings for the New Year. May it be a

<sup>1</sup> *War Records.*

happy and prosperous one, and may you ever have as willing hearts to defend you, in your need, as beat in the breasts of your friends,

“THE OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF THE  
SEVENTEENTH VIRGINIA INFANTRY.”

The New Year opened with cold, piercing weather, and the ground covered with snow; the pickets of both armies hugged their little fires closely, and there was *almost* quiet along the lines. The frequent shelling at Petersburg afforded remunerative employment to the soldiers of our army, who gathered in many a dollar (Confederate) from the sale of shells (whole or in pieces), bullets, and balls. They were disposed of to their brigade ordnance officer, who had instructions to pay a stipulated sum, per pound, for all that should be delivered to him.

Though the majority of the soldiers in the trenches fared poorly during the piercing winds of the New Year's opening, there were some whose larders were well supplied with viands of the best; the many “boxes” from home received by the few in the ranks, were liberally distributed among their fellows. The following from the writer's diary will convey an idea of the “substantials” utilized by his mess:

BILL OF FARE, NEW YEAR'S, 1865

Breakfast: Carcass of turkey; chine hash, seasoned with red pepper and onions; hot corn-bread; coffee with sugar; crackers and sorghum.

Dinner: Boiled rabbits with chine; turkey and ham, seasoned with onions; potatoes; crackers and pickles; flour dumpling.

Supper: Coffee with sugar; sorghum and crackers; cold turkey, rabbit, and chine.

Speaking generally, Lee's half-fed “tatterdemalions” had ardently stood the test of fire and steel, and on most of the battle-fields had held their own with the mighty hosts of the “blue”; but their trials during the bleak days of January were such as to cause both commissary and quartermaster to blush. Thinly clad, with only an overcoat here and there among them, they faced the keen blasts of winter and failed not, when called upon, to face the fiery blasts of war. Such trials will never be forgotten by those now living who bore the burden, though future generations may discredit the fact as contrary to the usages of a civilized country.

Even their one-third rations of meal and rancid bacon were not always on hand for distribution, and hunger often caused distress and lamentations among them. Under such circumstances this remnant of a gallant army, which had fought, with success, from the tangled fields of the Wilderness to the gory fields of Cold Harbor, had to defend a line of entrenchments from the Chickahominy to Hatcher's Run, a distance of about thirty-five miles, clothed like Lazarus, and living on the husks of what might be termed swine food. Only the true and noble of heart could have undergone such a test as a sacrifice to their love of home and country.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

VAUGHN ROAD; FEBRUARY 6, 1865. HARE'S HILL; MARCH 25, 1865

**F**EBRUARY opened without a stir. The armies on both sides were deterred from active movements by the miserable condition of the roads.

In the early days of the month Gen. R. E. Lee was made the Commander-in-chief of the armies of the Confederate States. This appointment was hailed with expressions of delight by every soldier in the Army of Northern Virginia, but it came too late, as will be seen as we draw nearer to the close of a four years' struggle,—a struggle without parallel in the annals of war. The affectionate admiration of his men for this great military chieftain will rise preëminent in the mind of the Southern reader; the mildew of time will never mar the brightness of his escutcheon nor blot from the heart the cherished image of this, our Military Father,—for as such we must ever revere him.

From the memory of his kind indulgence and ever-watchful care for the welfare of his men, from the thought of his every act, which marks him "*chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*," arises that unquenchable love that will survive in the bosoms of remote generations and quicken into being again when we shall gather in the land of love, where "time shall be no more."

On the 5th of February activities on the part of the armies were reinaugurated. The Federals moved in heavy force to their left and forced a passage across Hatcher's Run, at the Vaughn Road. In the afternoon they were confronted by parts of Hill's and Gordon's men; but, upon finding them intrenched, our men were withdrawn after nightfall. During the night the Federals were reported to be recrossing the river, and on the following morning Pegram's division was moved forward to reconnoiter, when it was attacked. Of the battle that followed, General Lee reports:

The battle was obstinately contested several hours, but General Pegram being killed while bravely encouraging his men, and Colonel

Hoffman wounded, some confusion occurred, and the division was pressed back to its original position. Evans' division, ordered by General Gordon to support Pegram, charged the enemy, forced him back, but was in turn compelled to retire. Mahone's division arriving, enemy was driven rapidly to his defenses on Hatcher's Run.

No advance by the enemy was made on the 7th. The day was most inclement, and the soldiers, especially our men, suffered terribly. General Lee, in a dispatch to James A. Seddon, Secretary of War, makes plain the condition of the army at said date. It is as follows:

All the disposable force of the right wing of the army has been operating against the enemy beyond Hatcher's Run since Sunday. Yesterday, the most inclement day of the winter, they had to be retained in line of battle, having been in the same condition the two previous days and nights. I regret to be obliged to state that under these circumstances, heightened by assaults and fire of the enemy, some of the men had been without meat for three days, and all were suffering from reduced rations and scant clothing, exposed to battle, cold, hail, and sleet. I have directed Colonel Cole, chief commissary, who reports that he has not a pound of meat at his disposal, to visit Richmond and see if nothing can be done. If some change is not made and the commissary department reorganized, I apprehend dire results. The physical strength of the men, if their courage survives, must fail under this treatment. Our cavalry has to be dispersed for want of forage. Fitz Lee's and Lomax's divisions are scattered because supplies cannot be transported when their services are required. I had to bring William H. F. Lee's division forty miles Sunday night to get him in position. Taking these facts in connection with the paucity of our numbers, you must not be surprised if calamity befalls us. According to reports of prisoners we were opposed on Hatcher's Run by the Second and Fifth Corps, part of the Ninth, one division of the Sixth, and Gregg's division (three brigades) of cavalry.

Extracts from Maj.-Gen. G. K. Warren's report are as follows:

We had proceeded but a short distance when heavy firing began on the Vaughn Road, and reports came that General Winthrop's brigade had been attacked by the enemy in force, and could not rejoin General Ayres, as both he and General Gregg had all they could do to maintain themselves, and needed assistance.

Being again called upon by General Gregg for reënforcements,

as the enemy was turning his left, I sent over to order across the run the supports from General Humphreys. Having made these arrangements, I went along with the movement toward Dabney's Mill, to which place General Crawford soon drove the enemy. Rallying there, the enemy forced back General Crawford's left somewhat, when General Ayres was sent in to his support on that flank, with his two brigades. The enemy was again driven, and to some distance, beyond Dabney's Mill. The firing continuing now to be constant and severe, I brought up the Third Brigade of General Griffin's division in close support, and was obliged to put it all with General Ayres, to hold our left. I sent also, at once, for at least a brigade of General Wheaton's division, intending to order the whole division up if affairs on the Vaughn road would permit. Unfortunately, however, the enemy got up reënforcements faster than I could, and when a brigade of General Wheaton's division was nearing the scene of action a charge was made by the enemy in a force (according to the Petersburg *Express*, consisting of three divisions) against which I had but six brigades opposed.

Our line, despite all the exertions of the prominent officers and much good conduct among those in the ranks, gave way and fell back rapidly, but with little loss, after the movement began; portions of the line continued to fire as it retired, and General Wheaton got his brigade in line, and with it, a portion of the others re-formed, so that the enemy was checked before our old lines were reached by us.

This battle was vigorously contested by both Confederates and Federals for several hours, and the losses, though not tabulated on the Confederate side, amounted to a total of 1539 for the Federals. The number of troops on the field must have been in the neighborhood of 50,000, as the "War Records" show that the enemy's forces amounted to 36,790. A large part of the available right wing of our army was on the field, but the number could not have exceeded 15,000 men,—infantry and cavalry. It was a game fight on our part, considering the condition of the men, who were almost without rations,—no meat having been issued for three days,—and very thinly clad. The condition of the weather,—marked by hail, rain and sleet,—made it all the more severe for them.

During the remainder of February and the greater part of March very little occurred on the lines worth recording. The dark days were beginning to cast their mantle around us. Despondency, in many occasions by late reverses to our arms, was making its impress too plainly to be misunderstood; yet Lee's



soldiers stood firm, determined to sustain unfalteringly their commander, be the result what it might.

From the 9th to the 16th of March a portion of the army,—Pickett's division and a part of Mahone's,—was used in trying, in vain, to capture a party of Federal raiders, who were making havoc along the canal and on the railroads above Richmond. For infantry to endeavor to capture cavalry, always on the go, was a feat very hard to accomplish, and all the marching and counter-marching of the foot-cavalry proved in vain. They were overtaken at one point only, and as soon as the firing opened from our side, the enemy, to use one of his own phrases, "skedaddled."

Until the 25th of the month everything remained comparatively quiet on all the lines. On this date before daylight, a great effort was made by our Commander to penetrate the Federal lines, and secure a permanent foothold therein; but the attempt, though favorable in the outset, proved a failure in the end.

The following extracts from the reports of the "War Records" will give the account in its true light.

From General Lee's report, dated March 25, 1865:

At daylight this morning General Gordon assaulted and carried the enemy's works at Hare's Hill, captured 9 pieces of artillery, 18 mortars, between 500 and 600 prisoners, among them one brigadier-general and a number of officers of lower grade. Enemy's lines were swept away for distance of 400 or 500 yards to right and left, and two efforts made to recover captured works were handsomely repulsed; but it was found that the inclosed works in rear, commanding enemy's main line, could only be taken at great sacrifice, and troops were withdrawn to original position. . . The conduct of the sharpshooters of Gordon's corps, who led the assault, deserves the highest commendation.

General Grant says:

Early on the morning of the 25th, the enemy assaulted our lines in front of the Ninth Corps (which held from the Appomattox River toward our left) and carried Fort Steadman and a part of the line to the right and left of it, established themselves, and turned the guns of the fort against us; but our troops on either flank held their ground until the reserves were brought up, when the enemy was driven back, with a heavy loss in killed and wounded and 1,900 prisoners.

General Meade's estimate of losses is as follows:

On the whole, I think it would be reasonable to estimate the enemy's losses in killed and wounded as 50 per cent. greater than

ours; this would make them about 2,000, which added to the prisoners would give 4,800. Taking in stragglers and deserters, I think it safe to estimate Lee's loss for the day not less than 5,000 men.

Major-Gen. Jno. G. Parke, who commanded the Ninth Corps, holding the lines attacked, gives the following version of the manner of the attack:

About 4:30 o'clock on the morning of March 25 last, the enemy assaulted this part with Gordon's corps, reënforced by Bushrod Johnson's division. At 4 a. m. the picket-line had been visited by the captain of the picket, who found the men on the alert and discovered no signs of movement by the enemy. Taking advantage of the order allowing deserters to bring their arms with them, the enemy sent forward squads of pretended deserters, who, by this ruse, gained possession of several of the picket-posts. They were closely followed by a strong storming party of picked men; this, by three heavy columns. The picket-line was overpowered after one discharge of their pieces. The trench guard, though stoutly resisting, was unable to withstand the rush of numbers, and the main line was broken between Batteries 9 and 10, near No. 10. The enemy turned to the right and left hand, the right column soon gaining Battery 10, which is open in the rear, thus acquiring great advantage for an assault on Fort Steadman.

The garrison of Steadman, consisting of a battalion of the Fourteenth New York Heavy Artillery, under Major Dandall, made a spirited resistance, but being attacked in front, flank, and rear, was overpowered and most of it captured. The artillery in the fort, consisting of four light 12's, discharged a dozen rounds of canister before being taken. These guns, as well as those in Battery 10, were at once turned upon us. The enemy then pushed gradually along the lines toward Fort Haskell, driving out the troops holding Batteries 11 and 12, neither of which are inclosed works. It was still quite dark, which circumstance greatly augmented the difficulty of formation to check the progress of the enemy, it being impossible to distinguish friend and foe; and made the use of artillery upon them impracticable at any distance. At the first alarm General McLaughlin sent members of his staff to the various positions on his front, and himself proceeded to Fort Haskell, thence along the line to Steadman. He found that our troops had been driven from Battery 11. He directed Mortar Battery 12 to open on it, and sent for the Fifty-ninth Massachusetts, and on its arrival recaptured Battery 11 by a bayonet charge. He then proceeded to Fort Steadman, and was there taken prisoner.

The foregoing attempt to break through the lines of Grant and double up his army was the last battle fought between the

two great armies that had faced each other for such a length of time. For nearly a year the "gray" had practically acted on the defensive; had given and taken the "hammering" with the nerve and strength of a giant; when opportunity offered they had taken the advantage and pushed themselves into the faces of the enemy, thereby prolonging the conflict, and doing great damage to the "blue." This last attempt was a failure, and the only thing remaining for the Army of Northern Virginia to do was to get away from Richmond and Petersburg the best way possible.

It had been General Lee's intention to fall back a month before this conflict was brought on, and all his arrangements had been completed for this step as early as the latter part of February, but the powers at Richmond had overruled him, and he was put in the position of doing the best he could. This is a fact that the writer knows full well, for he copied all the orders of General Lee giving the roads and ways by which the numerous brigades, divisions, and corps were to proceed as soon as the order for the abandonment of the lines would be issued. Could these views and intentions of General Lee have been carried out, the contest would have been prolonged many months. It looked, though, as if Providence had controlled the destinies, not only of Lee's army, but also of the Confederate States of America.

The band of steel, which had so long encircled the cities of Richmond and Petersburg, was about to break; the strain of the last battle had nearly severed the remaining fibres, and the "blues" were eagerly looking forward to their triumphant entrance into the Capital of the Southern Confederacy.

## CHAPTER XLIX

THE CLOSING DAYS. APRIL, 1865

THE battle of the 25th of March was a deathknell to the Confederacy. The losses sustained by our army,—some 5000,—so reduced the already diminished numbers, that it was but a question of a short time when our lines would be snapped and evacuated.

On March 31st, the “War Records” show that the effective force of Grant’s army facing us,—exclusive of Sheridan’s cavalry—was 114,335. Sheridan had with him three divisions (according to his report of March 16, 1865), numbering 9000 effectives. These troops crossed the James River on the 26th, and united with the main army, thus giving the Federals a grand total of 123,335 men, present for duty. The effectives on our side did not exceed 32,000 muskets, and this force was scattered over a line of entrenchments extending about 35 miles.

On the morning of the 29th of March the last grand movement to the left was inaugurated by our opponent. The commands of Sheridan and Warren,—consisting of more than 26,000 men,—were pushed forward toward Dinwiddie Court House. By night the cavalry had reached that point, and the left of the infantry extended to the Quaker Road. The 30th was occupied with heavy skirmishing between the enemy and our troops, composed of the divisions of Johnston and Pickett, and Fitz Lee’s cavalry. The enemy advanced his columns on the following morning (March 31), and during the day a very spirited and well-contested battle ensued. The enemy was driven in at several points, but his large numbers enabled him to reënforce promptly. It was after dark when the firing ceased, and our men lay on their arms. We had forced our way to within less than a mile of the Court House. The fighting was severe and our losses heavy.

About daylight on the 1st of April our troops moved to Five Forks, to protect their communications, which were threatened. Under the command of General Pickett, a position was occupied with three of his own and two of General Johnston’s brigades,

with Gen. W. H. F. Lee's cavalry on his right, and Gen. Fitz Lee's and General Rosser's on his left. Robert's brigade was on the White Oak Road, connecting with General Anderson.

The greater part of the morning was occupied in artillery and infantry skirmishing, after which quiet reigned for several hours. In the afternoon a heavy force of the enemy appeared, and what followed will be given in the words of General Lee in his report to the Secretary of War. He says:

A large force of infantry, believed to be the Fifth Corps, with other troops, turned General Pickett's left and drove him back on the White Oak road, separating him from General Fitz Lee, who was compelled to fall back across Hatcher's Run. General Pickett's present position is not known. General Fitz Lee reports that the enemy is massing his infantry heavily behind the cavalry in his front. The infantry that engaged General Anderson yesterday has moved from his front toward our right, and is supposed to participate in the operations above described. Prisoners have been taken to-day from the Twenty-fourth Corps, and it is believed that most of that corps is now south of the James. Our loss to-day is not known.

The battle above described is known as that of "Five Forks."

The following, from "Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant," gives an idea of the felicitous condition of the Federal soldiers:

After the fall of Petersburg and when the armies of the Potomac and the James were in motion to head off Lee's army, the *morale* of the National troops had greatly improved. There was no more straggling, no more rear guards. The men who in former times had been falling back were now, as I have already stated, striving to get to the front.

Affairs were now assuming a startling aspect. It required every effort of officers and men to meet the emergency. The troops on our side who fought the battle of Five Forks were retreating in disorder, and from their disorganized condition it was impossible to rally them. Finally, every one had to look out for himself. Many men were captured by the now enthused enemy. Our artillery was in their possession and for the first time since organization Pickett's Division had turned its back upon the enemy. Fortunately night closed in and gave the men hopes of getting away, and their retreat was rapid.

The heavy cannonading in the direction of Petersburg during the night of the 2d of April informed this portion of the army

that something serious was transpiring there; but it was not until the next morning that the news of the evacuation of that stronghold by our entire forces was received. The lines had been stretched to reach an extent of about 35 miles, when the first serious assault caused them to give way. The enemy having broken through the weakly defended lines at Burgess Mill, four miles to the right of Petersburg, the troops remaining after the battle of Five Forks were cut off, and marched in the direction of Amelia Court House.

During Sunday, the second, while President Davis was worshipping in St. Paul's Church, Richmond, a telegram from General Lee was handed him. He immediately arose and left the church. This was the first information received by him that the lines at Petersburg and Richmond had to be abandoned that night. All arrangements had been made by the Commander of the armies, and his orders issued.

That night and early Monday morning our army moved back, and the enemy moved forward and occupied the two cities. As we marched away from our lines Grant's men followed with cautious tread. Our direction of travel was toward Amelia Court House. Monday morning (April 3) the long wagon-train had overtaken General Pickett's division, or rather, what remained of it after the battle of Five Forks, and these troops were put in charge and ordered to protect it. The enemy's cavalry were lurking near, and upon every opportunity made a descent upon it; but in most cases they were easily met and driven back. On the morning of the 5th the long train, with its escort, reached the Danville Railroad,—about three miles below Amelia Court House, when for a considerable time it halted, allowing the troops with their cortège of ladies, children, and their attendants,—in every conceivable form of conveyance,—from Richmond and Petersburg to pass on. Then our column again moved forward, passing through Amelia Court House; but because of a cavalry raid on the wagon-train that morning, the road was blockaded and we were compelled to move on another road, with General Mahone's division in the lead. The Federal cavalry burnt a portion of our train and destroyed all our stores,—medical, commissary, and ordnance.

Our movements had now become perilous in every respect. Our enemies, in numbers numerous on all sides of us, would every now and then dash in upon the moving trains, capture, burn, and be off again before our infantry could arrive; they

would then occupy our front, and before we could proceed they had to be driven off. The soldiers were nearly exhausted from excessive fatigue and the want of food, notwithstanding which they marched throughout Wednesday night (April 5),—with the exception of about one hour,—in a severe rain storm.

The following morning (April 6) a halt was called, and an hour was permitted for rest and breakfast,—the latter consisting of parched corn and coffee for some, and nothing for many. Our suffering had now become great, many were so overcome as to slumber in line, and as we passed along numbers of the men were fast asleep in the fence corners, temporarily indifferent to whatever might be transpiring.

During the forenoon of this day (April 6) the enemy thickened about us, bringing on frequent skirmishes. These delays caused a halt to our advance, which permitted the remaining wagons and artillery to move forward to a place of comparative safety. In the afternoon Ewell's corps (those left of them), closed up on those in front of them and took a position on Sailor's Creek. Not long after, the rattle of musketry opened in a piece of woodland on our right, through which the wagon-train had passed, and almost immediately the teamsters and stragglers were seen rushing therefrom. The Federal cavalry, taking advantage of a gap in the column, had made a descent and captured a number of pieces of artillery that were moving in line with the wagons, which they turned upon our skirmishers. Pickett's division was ordered up, and very quickly drove the enemy back and recaptured two of the guns; but the enemy having received heavy reinforcements of infantry, the battle became general.

The divisions of Lee and Anderson were then brought forward, and the booming of artillery and the loud rattle of the musketry resounded on all sides. Later in the day the Federals, with an overpowering force, broke through our position on the left, and, getting into our rear, opened a cross-fire with artillery. Heavy columns of the enemy now swept down the line, disorganizing and capturing a large number of the troops engaged. Few of the brigades came out in organized bodies, and those who effected their escape did so under a most terrific fire. The divisions of Pickett, Anderson and Bushrod Johnson were nearly annihilated, something like 10,000 of them having been killed, wounded, and captured. This battle was known among us as "Sailor's Creek."

The retreating "Johnnies," after an all night march, on the

morning of the 7th of April reached Farmville, where many were fortunate in getting something to eat,—after charging upon the commissary stores and helping themselves.

The effective force of Lee's army at this period did not exceed 10,000 men. The retreat during the day was exceedingly slow. Several spirited conflicts occurred to retard the advance of the enemy, and every attempt of the Federals to cut through our columns was quickly frustrated. On the 8th our march was more expeditious, but it was a movement of a small, straggling, almost exhausted body of soldiers toward surrender. The Federal columns were on all sides, and with so few effective men as we had, it was impossible to cut our way through their lines.

During the night our trains,—such as we had,—moved, and on the morning of the 9th were parked within about one and a half miles of Appomattox Court House. The Federal prisoners, a pretty good lot of them, were marched up and placed in a nearby ravine.

Some fighting occurred on the lines between seven and nine o'clock, but it soon ceased, and it was rumored among the men that the day of Surrender had come.

It was too true. On that day, April 9, 1865, the meeting between General Lee and General Grant took place in the McLean House, where the terms of surrender were agreed upon. The last battle of the Great War had been fought; the campaigns were all over; and thus ended the brilliant career of the Army of Northern Virginia.

THE END



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